Daily Report

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Near East & South Asia

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LD2005124888 [Editorial Report]

Lebanon

Syrian entry into Beirut's southern suburb is "unavoidable," Syrian Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an declared prior to departing for consultations in Damascus, Voice of Lebanon radio reported. The general told AFP that he hoped there will be "no more hostages either in the suburbs or elsewhere" by the time the Syrian troops make their deployment.

In remarks cited by Tehran radio 20 May, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati said his country will not oppose the Syrian entry if it meets the objective of ensuring "lasting security" for the Lebanese people. Besharati noted that Iran and Syria are "sincerely cooperating" to restore calm to the area.

A Tehran radio commentary on Iran's efforts to end the "tragic clashes" stressed the importance of eliminating the "causes of discord and division" between Shi'ites in order to create Muslim, especially Shi'ite, unity in Lebanon.

While political consultations were occurring, the 10,000 Syrian troops in Beirut were placed on alert, and all soldiers on leave were recalled to their barracks, AFP reported. Fighting between the Amal Movement and Hizballah continued in the southern suburb, Voice of Lebanon radio reported, adding that at least 5 people were killed and 35 wounded. According to the radio, various areas where Syrian troops have been deployed were subjected to artillery fire.

Following meetings of the Amal Movement's leadership, the Political Bureau released a statement accusing "partitionist forces" of siding with Hizballah, Beirut radio reported, adding that the statement came out in favor of the "security plan" as the "only solution" to the current conflict. According to a separate statement carried by the radio, the Amal Organizational Bureau accepted the forced resignation of Hasan Sharaf, military commander for Beirut, expelled four security officials from the Al-Biqa' Valley, and made several other changes among its military and security officials.

Egypt-USSR

Ahmad 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian deputy premier and foreign minister, was received by CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev to whom he delivered a message from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, MENA reported 20 May. Following "extensive and constructive" talks with the Soviet leader, 'Abd al-Majid and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze began discussions on issues of common concern, the agency reported.

In remarks cited by TASS, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovskiy stressed that the USSR attaches "great importance" to relations with Egypt in the area of bilateral affairs as well as in the context of "developing dialogue" to solve regional problems. The Soviet Union hopes the relationship will be "deepened and enriched," Petrovskiy declared.

Gulf Conflict

Iran is not only at war with Iraq but "with global arrogance," Majlis Speaker 'Ali Hashemi-Rafsanjani declared in remarks cited by IRNA. The United States has "officially entered into a war" with Iran, Hashemi-Rafsanjani asserted, and he called for an increase in military strength to counter Iraq and its supporters, which have become much too "impudent and insolent."

Hashemi-Rafsanjani termed the "Bayt al-Moqaddas-6" operations in Al-Sulaymaniyah "an appropriate warning" against U.S.-Iraqi cooperation, and he hoped that the Iranian military's "thrust" into Kurdistan would have "valuable repercussions in military achievements."

Afghanistan-Pakistan

The Afghan Foreign Ministry Liaison Department submitted a second memorandum to the UN mission in Kabul alleging a Pakistani violation of the Geneva accords, Kabul radio reported, adding that Pakistan is accused of continuing to increase arms deliveries to Afghan territory.

Israel

In an effort to "prevent irregularities," the IDF has appointed an officer in charge of detentions in the West Bank and has made plans to reorganize the "chaotic" Israeli prison system, Jerusalem radio reported, adding that Palestinian detainees from the West Bank will be concentrated in three major institutions. Some 1,800 Palestinians have been placed under "administrative detention" since the beginning of the uprising, THE JERUSALEM POST noted.

Palestinian Affairs

Dissidents Meet on Beirut Camps, Issue Decisions

JN1905175088 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1335 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] A meeting was held this morning, Thursday 19 May 1988, at the headquarters of the Al-Sa'iqah Organization in Damascus. The meeting was attended by brother comrades Khalid al-Fahum, 'Abd al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar, Dr Samir Ghawshah, Khalid 'Abd al-Majid, Abu Layla, Muhammad Khalifah, Sami Qandil, Talal Naji, Fadl Shururu, Abu Saji, Abu Jasim, Abu Nidal Musallam, and Abu Mahir al-Yamani [Ahmad Yamani].

The participants in the meeting discussed the tragic situation in Beirut's camps and the negative and destructive consequences of the continuation of this problem for our masses in the occupied territory and in Lebanon.

They also discussed its negative consequences on our Arab and international moves and the need to take all necessary measures to deal with this situation and restore normalcy. The participants have unanimously made the following decisions:

1. To implement all the clauses of the agreement reached in the meetings of the representatives of the Palestinian resistance movement and the Lebanese national movement in Beirut on 9 May 1988.

2. To set up a committee comprising comrades Sami Qandil, Fadl Shururu, Ahmad Fu'ad, Mamduh Nawfal, Abu Khalid al-Shamal, Abu Nidal al-Ashqar, and a representative of the Revolutionary Council to oversee the immediate implementation of the agreement.

3. To work to lift the siege imposed on the brother fighters of the Fatah Uprising Movement in the Shatila camp.

4. To strengthen the security force in the Shatila and Burj al-Barajinah camps to prevent friction, restore the situation to its normal state in the two camps, and prevent any friction in the Mar 'Ilyas camp and condemn any friction in that camp.

5. To intensify the central contacts by both sides to deal with the situation and to issue orders to implement the agreement and prevent any further fighting or resorting to arms to resolve differences.

6. To meet with the representatives of the named factions and contact the Lebanese national movement's faction to begin implementation of the agreement.

Fatah Responds to Statement

NC1905180888 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The Fatah Movement has reacted to a statement by the dissidents regarding the situation in the Palestinian camps. The movement has stressed that it will continue to exercise self-restraint in compliance with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's instructions, with a view to giving the key figures and committees an opportunity to restore the situation to normal after the dissidents brought corruption and destruction to the camps.

Fatah noted that it has evidence of collusion between the dissidents and their backers regarding plans to strike at the Palestinian people.

Hawatimah Reportedly Asked To Leave Damascus

LD1905093388 Kuwait KUNA in English 0827 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Kuwait, May 19 (KUNA)—The Syrian authorities have asked Secretary General of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine Nayif Hawatimah to leave Damascus, according to a Kuwaiti daily Thursday.

AL-ANBA', in a dispatch from Tunis, did not give further details to its report. Hawatimah had arrived in Damascus on April 19 to attend funeral of late Palestinian military leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

It quoted Palestinian sources, who it said returned to Tunis from Damascus yesterday, as saying that the Syrian authorities have refused to grant entry permits to a number of Palestinian figures.

AL-ANBA' also reported that a celebration to mark the elapse of forty days on the assassination of Abu Jihad will be held in three Arab capitals. It also quoted Palestinian sources as saying that the celebrations will be marked in Kuwait, Tunis and Baghdad.

Noting that the decision was taken two days ago, the paper said that the main celebration will be in Kuwait.

DFLP Denies Report

JN1905175588 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1726 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The DFLP has categorically denied a report by a Palestinian source in Tunis that the Syrian authorities had asked DFLP Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah to leave Syria.

A DFLP spokesman said Nayif Hawatimah is still in Syria. He added that the circulation of such reports aims to obstruct the normalization of relations between the PLO and Syria.

U.S. Told of Israeli Plan To Kill PLO Leaders

JN2005073288 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 1 May 88 p 1

[Text] London — AL-ITTIHAD has learned that the U.S. Administration received secret official documents on Israeli plans to liquidate PLO leaders abroad 2 weeks before the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces.

Western diplomatic sources in London have told AL-ITTIHAD that several Israeli Labor Party members who opposed such Israeli designs leaked the documents to the U.S. State Department so Washington would exert pressure on the Israeli Government to prevent it from carrying out its plan to liquidate PLO leaders.

The sources asserted that the U.S. Administration did not exert any pressure on Yitzhaq Shamir's government in that regard, but merely instructed the U.S. State Department not to publicize these documents or leak information about them to the media.

The same sources said 'Ezer Weizman, the Israeli minister, took part in informing Washington of Israel's assassination plans.

Egypt

Reportage on 'Abd al-Majid Visit to USSR

Arrives, Makes Statement

NC2005063788 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, arrived in Moscow tonight for a 3-day official visit to the Soviet Union. 'Abd al-Majid was met by the deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and the first deputy minister of foreign affairs.

In an arrival statemewnt, 'Abd al-Majid said he will convey a message from President Husni Mubarak to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. 'Abd al-Majid praised the ties between Egypt and the Soviet Union and said he is looking forward to his talks with Soviet officials. The talks, he said, will concern bilateral relations and international affairs.

The deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers also made a statement, saying that the Soviet people have a high opinion of the Egyptian people's efforts to achieve development. He added that the Soviet Union is seeking to improve its ties with Egypt.

Our radio correspondent has learned that Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid will deliver Mubarak's message to Gorbachev at a meeting tomorrow afternoon. Bilateral talks will begin tomorrow morning at the Soviet Foreign Ministry.

'Abd al-Majid will head the Egyptian delegation and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will head his country's delegation. The two sides will discuss issues of common concern, particularly the situation in the Middle East in light of current efforts to promote the peace process.

The situations in the Gulf and in Afghanistan and bilateral relations and ways of promoting them will also be discussed.

Tomorrow morning Dr 'Abd al-Majid will lay a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier.

Gives Message to Gorbachev

NC2005091988 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0855 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Moscow, 20 May (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, handed a message from President Husni Mubarak to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev during their meeting today.

The Soviet leader told Dr 'Abd al-Majid: Your presence in the Soviet Union is full of meanings, which will be discussed at the negotiating table.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid replied by saying: I totally agree with the CPSU general secretary's assessment of this visit.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid arrived in Moscow yesterday for a 3-day official visit.

Talks With Shevardnadze

NC2005101988 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0955 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Moscow, 20 May (MENA)—Official talks between Egypt and the Soviet Union began at the Soviet Foreign Ministry at 1100 today. Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze led their countries' delegations to the talks.

At the outset of the session Shevardnadze described President Husni Mubarak's message to Soviet leader Gorbachev as profound and expressive. He added that the talks between 'Abd al-Majid and Gorbachev were enjoyable and a good prelude to the conclusion of economic and technical cooperation agreements between the two countries.

The Soviet foreign minister noted that the talks were very profound and practical and the viewpoints similar.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that President Mubarak's message expresses the Egyptian leadership's desire to meet with the Soviet leadership, which has demonstrated wisdom, objectivity, and seriousness in dealing with various problems.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid added: I share the Soviet foreign minister's appreciation for and satisfaction with the extensive and constructive talks I had with Soviet leader Gorbachev.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid noted that the nature of the visit confirms that the Egyptian and Soviet leaders wish to meet, consult, and exchange opinions for the sake of establishing peace, stability, and development in both countries.

The Egyptian-Soviet talks are scheduled to resume later today. A joint communique will be issued tomorrow on 'Abd al-Majid's visit to Moscow from 19 to 21 May.

AFP Notes Economic Agreement

AU1905132388 Paris AFP in English 1258 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Moscow, May 19 (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid arrived here Thursday on a three-day official visit to Moscow during which he is to sign a major five-year economic and trade agreement amid an improved climate in Soviet-Egyptian relations.

Mr. 'Abd al-Majid, who is the most senior Egyptian official to visit Moscow since 1977, is also expected to discuss prospects for a Middle East settlement with the Soviet leadership.

Bilateral relations, which had suffered during the presidency of Anwar al-Sadat, have steadily improved since President Husni Mubarak came to power in October 1981.

Mr. 'Abd al-Majid and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on Saturday would sign the agreement calling for increased Soviet investment in Egypt and repayment of the Egyptian multi-million dollar debt to the Soviet Union through increased exports, Egyptian diplomatic sources told AFP Thursday.

The agreement was finalised here Thursday after a meeting of Soviet and Egyptian experts, the sources said.

It notably provides for the Soviet Union to expand a steel factory in Hulwan, south of Cairo, and increasing the plant's capacity to one-and-a-half million tons annually from 850,000 tons. In addition, Moscow will complete an aluminium plant at Naj' Hammadi in Upper Egypt.

Egyptian exports, which already comprise cotton and textiles, would be expanded under the accord to include carpets, furniture, clothes, leather and fruit and vegetables, the sources said.

The counter trade agreement was "so we can pay off our debts to the Soviet Union," the sources said.

The economic and trade agreement is the fourth to be signed between Moscow and Cairo—the most recent in 1971. The others were signed in 1958 and 1962.

Mr. 'Abd al-Majid is due to hold talks with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev while in Moscow and will deliver a message from President Mubarak, the Egyptian sources said.

Further Reportage on Visit

For more Soviet and Egyptian reportage on the official visit to Moscow by Foreign Minister 'Abd al-Majid, including his meetings with CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Shevardnadze, see the Near East and South Asia section of the 19 May Soviet Union DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Court To Try 15 Linked to Libyan Intelligence

NC2005072688 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0647 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Cairo, 20 May (MENA)—The Higher Emergency State Security Court will begin tomorrow morning, Saturday, the trial of 15 defendants, 8 of whom remain at large, accused of collaborating with Libyan intelligence.

The purpose of this collaboration was to implement hostile actions against Egypt with the aim of causing damage to the country's political and economic situation and national interests.

The prosecution has demanded life and shorter-term sentences with hard labor for the defendants on counts of collaborating with foreign intelligence with the intention of carrying out hostile acts against the country and of possessing weapons and explosives without license.

Libya

Reportage on Visit by Guinea-Bissau President

Arrives, Makes Statement

LD1905210988 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1930 GMT 19 May 88

[Excerpts] President Joao Bernardo Vieira, president of Guinea-Bissau, arrived in Tripoli this evening on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah. The guest president was ceremoniously received at Tripoli International Airport, where the brother secretary of the General People's Congress was at the forefront of those receiving him. [passage omitted]

The Guinea-Bissau president made a statement to a JANA correspondent in which he said: I came to visit my friend and brother, Mu'ammar Al-Qadhdhafi. Since the independence of Guinea-Bissau our relations with the Jamahiriyah have been strong.

These relations were created during our joint struggle against imperialism. We are very proud of our solidarity with the people of the Jamahiriyah and their leader.

Naturally, our relations with the Jamahiriyah are continuing to grow, especially now, and are entering a new phase that is increasing the times of friendship and fraternity between the Jamahiriyah and Guinea-Bissau.

He added: This visit strengthens the relations between the Republic of Guinea-Bissau and the Jamahiriyah, which will enter a new phase, naturally, as Guinea-Bissau and Libya have joint interests in the African, Islamic and nonaligned fields, and they will engage in strong fraternal relations.

He said: This visit will enable us to increase cooperation and to strengthen these relations, especially concerning the struggle in africa, the South African issue, and the Middle East issue.

Guinea-Bissau and Libya have joint interests and we will work toward strengthening our relations in the African and all other fields.

He added: The Guinean people were under Portuguese colonialism and are in solidarity with all peoples struggling for their liberation, especially against imperialism. This is our duty as Africans and as a people aspiring for progress and for combating colonialism and imperialism.

The president is accompanied by Julio Semedo, minister of foreign affairs; Bartolomeu Pereira, minister of planning [title as heard]; Bernard Cardoso, minister of economic coordination and international cooperation; and Dr Antoine (Lorance), the president's economic advisor.

Received by Al-Qadhdhafi

LD1905211088 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1930 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] This evening, the brother leader of the revolution received Joao Bernardo Vieira, president of Guinea-Bissau. The meeting was attended by the brother secretaries of the General People's Congress and the secretary of the General People's Committee.

This evening, in the Green Hall of Al-Kabir Hotel, a one-on-one session was held between the brother leader of the revolution and President Joao Bernardo Vieira of Guinea-Bissau.

Speaks at Opening Session

LD2005033388 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2315 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution and President Joao Bernardo Vieira, president of the Council of State in the Republic of Guinea-bissau attended the opening session of Libyan Arab-Guinean talks yesterday [19 May].

This meeting was attended by the brother secretary of the General People's Congress; the brother secretary of the General People's Committee; secretaries of the General People's Committees for Information, Culture, Planning, Economy, and Treasury; and a member of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison.

On the Guinea-Bissau side, the meeting was attended by the ministers of foreign affairs and planning, the minister of state for foreign affairs and international cooperation, and Dr Antoine (Lorence), economic adviser to the Council of State Presidency.

During this meeting, the brother leader of the revolution made a speech, at the beginning of which he welcomed President Vieira and his accompanying delegation. He said: We thank you for replying to our invitation and for paying this visit to your second homeland.

The leader added: We are very pleased with this meeting. We would have liked to have met on a continual basis, but in fact we fell short in this case. We should make up for the time that has been wasted.

The leader pointed out that there are a number of opportunities for cooperation between the two countries which should be used in the interst of both peoples. He emphasized that the African revolutionary forces should unite their efforts against the common enemy.

He said that we are following with admiration your revolutionary and wise leadership of Guinea-Bissau. We hope Africans will be like yourself. We would like to benefit from this meeting to promote cooperation between both countries; this meeting is also an opportunity to bolster friendship between us.

President Joao Bernardo Vieira, president of the Guinea-Bissau Council of State, delivered a speech, at the beginning of which he saluted the brother leader of the revolution and the revolutionary stands of the Great 1 September Revolution and its championing of the issue of freedom in Africa.

He expressed the thanks of the people in Guinea-Bissau to the Libyan Arab people. In his speech, President Vieira indicated the strong friendship existing between the countries.

He said that these relations of friendship have witnessed continual progress since the independence of Guinea-Bissau from colonialism. President Vieira emphasized his country's desire to bolster and consolidatae relations in the interest of both friendly peoples. He said: In Guinea-Bissau we have the political desire and will to develop these relations in various fields.

In his speech, President Vieira saluted the leading role played by the Arab nation in assisting African states to end colonialism and achieve their freedom. He said: Our people have greatly benefited from Arab support in political and economic spheres in overcoming colonialism. [sentence indistinct].

Yesterday the brother leader of the revolution received the Guinea-Bissau president. The audience was attended by the brother secretary of the General People's Congress and the secretary of the General People's Committee.

This evening, the brother leader of the revolution gave a dinner banquet in honor of President Joao Bernardo Vieira and the delegation accompanying him. The banquet was attended by the secretary and members of the General People's Committee and heads of political missions accredited to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Lebanon's Walid Junblatt Received by Al-Qadhdhafi

LD1805172688 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1514 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Tripoli, 18 May (JANA) — The brother leader of the revolution has received Brother Walid Jublatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party in Lebanon.

Al-Qadhdhafi Congratulates Regional Leaders
LD1805214488 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1930 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Telephone conversations have been held between the brother leader of the revolution and Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, YAR President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, and King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia, in which the brother leader of the revolution exchanged congratulations on the occasion of the beginning of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr.

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Cable From PLO's 'Arafat
LD1505115088 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1030 GMT 15 May 88

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution has received a cable of thanks and gratitude from Yasir 'Arafat in reply to the condolences cable which was sent by the brother leader on the death of Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad.

Hawke's Remarks About Libya, Vanuatu 'Unfounded'
LD1905153988 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1440 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Tripoli, 19 May (JANA) — A responsible source at the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison has announced that the allegations made by Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke about the involvement of the Great Jamahiriyah in the disturbances and incidents which occurred in the State of Vanuatu last Monday were unfounded.

Commenting on Hawke's allegations, the source at the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison added that implicating the Great Jamahiriyah in these incidents was no more than an obvious attempt to justify Australia's blatant interference in the internal affairs of the independent State of Vanuatu.

He went on to say that these allegations were within the framework of the shameless maneuvers to which imperialist powers always resort; until now we have avoided classifying Australia as being one of them.

The source also said that the Great Jamahiriyah's stand vis-a-vis freedom causes everywhere, including in the South Pacific region, is principled and constant and is not open to distortion or misinterpretation, nor could it be used as a pretext or cover for imperialist interference.

JANA Notes Resumption of Algerian-Moroccan Ties
LD1705184088 Tripoli JANA in English 1742 GMT 17 May 88

[Text] Algiers, Al-Maa [May] 17, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Algeria and Morocco have decided to resume yesterday their diplomatic relations at ambassador level.

The Algerian news agency that announced the above news has said that this step comes to bolster the unionist building of the great Arab Maghreb.

Military Gives Deserters 'One Last Chance'
LD1505211388 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 May 88

[Text] Gentlemen: The brother leader of the revolution and commander in chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces gave a speech during the emergency session held by the Basic People's Congress of Al-Zarruq in the Gulf of Sidra municipality, which was called to discuss a human rights document.

In light of this speech, the Libyan Arab Armed Forces General Command announces it has decided to give one last chance for deserters to join their units. The deadline is 31 May 1988.

Morocco

Exchange of Envoys With Algeria in 'Near Future'
LD1905133788 Rabat MAP in English 1237 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Rabat May 19 (MAP)—Morocco and Algeria will reopen their common borders and exchange ambassadors in the near future, Moroccan Minister of the Interior and Information Driss Basri has said.

In a statement to "AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT" daily published Wednesday, Basri said the name of the Moroccan ambassador in Algiers might be known today. He said a new impetus will be given to relations between Morocco and Algeria thanks to the reopening of borders, the resumption of the free circulation of the two countries' nationals and the reactivation of trade. All these measures, he said, will take place very soon.

Tunisia

Ghannouchi Grants Interview After Release
PM1805081988 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 May 88 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed report: "Ghannouchi to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT After Presidential Amnesty: 'Release Is Step on Road to National Salvation in Tunisia'"]

[Excerpts] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Rached Ghannouchi, leader of the Islamic Tendency Movement in Tunisia, has expressed satisfaction about his release. Contacted by telephone at his home in Tunis, Ghannouchi said:

"I consider my release another step by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on the road to implementing the national change and salvation plan, especially as important decisions have been made to restore hopes to the people and work toward turning over the dark pages of the previous era's file."

Ghannouchi, who was serving life imprisonment with hard labor at the 9 April Prison in Tunis, was released at dawn yesterday under an amnesty issued the day before yesterday by Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. [passage omitted]

Ghannouchi went on to say: The Islamic [Tendency Movement's] confidence in God and President Ben Ali is great; it hopes the new step will be the effective beginning of a solution to the Islamic Tendency problem as a whole so its proponents can find a suitable place within a united, harmonious, cooperative Tunisian family inspired by great motives in facing the future and engaging in the battle of development and destiny in isolation from grumbling, frustration, and spite. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, official Tunisian sources confirmed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that President Ben Ali's government has decided to deal with Ghannouchi and his colleagues in the leadership of the Islamic Tendency Movement, whom it described as moderates, and that further steps will be taken shortly to deal with the movement's file via negotiations with Ghannouchi. [passage omitted]

President Talks With Libya's Al-Qadhdhafi
LD1805202088 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had a telephone conversation this afternoon with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. The president of the Republic and the leader of the Libyan revolution exchanged greetings on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr and also reviewed the relations of fraternity between the two sister countries, in addition to the situation in the Arab world, especially the latest developments in the Maghreb.

President Congratulates Algeria, Morocco on Ties
LD1705102888 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 16 May 88

[Text] Following the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria and the Kingdom of Morocco, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali sent cables of congratulations to both President Chadli Bendjedid and King Hassan II. Here follows the text of the cable sent to the Algerian president:

Your Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria, Algiers:

I received with the utmost satisfaction the news of the resumption of diplomatic relations between fraternal Algeria and Morocco and I should like to convey to you my heartfelt congratulations for this wise decision which sincerely expresses the shared desires and aspirations of our peoples to build a Greater Arab Maghreb and to eliminate all obstacles impeding the people's march.

I therefore praise this blessed step, which augurs well for the region and which [words indistinct] (?contributes toward) the establishment of a complete and integrated Maghreb characterized by sincere brotherliness, effective solidarity, and mutual interest.

I am convinced that this invigorating step will give the march of the Maghreb a new impetus and will pave the way for the desired objective. I pray to God to bless our efforts and to guide us for the benefit of our peoples and their progress.

Your brother, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, president of the Tunisian Republic.

Concerning the same event, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali sent the following cable to King Hassan II, the monarch of the Moroccan Kingdom:

The resumption of diplomatic relations between the two sisters of Morocco and Algeria is a happy omen that came to us while we are welcoming the blessed 'Id al-Fitr.

I should like on this happy occasion to convey to you sincerest heartfelt congratulations on this wise decision and on the elimination of all the obstacles that obstructed this decision.

Our delight with this blessed step confirms our optimism for the dawning future and the establishment of complete and integrated relations in the Maghreb, responding to the aspirations of our peoples and working toward their mutual aims and benefit.

I [words indistinct] all the good efforts that bore fruit, thanks to God and his assistance. I pray to Him, the High and Almighty, to guide us and to inspire us on the path of good and [word indistinct].

Your brother Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, president of the Tunisian Republic.

'Subversive Scheme' Planned Against Saudi Arabia

JN1905121588 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1108 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Paris, 19 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-MUHARRIR issued here has said the Iranian regime has set up an operations room called the Black Room. This room comprises representatives from the Defense and Interior Ministries, the intelligence services, and the Revolutionary Guards Corps.

It has been established to work out a new subversive scheme against Saudi Arabia and to stir up riots in Saudi Arabia during the coming pilgrimage season.

The weekly paper adds that the Iranian operations room has in fact drawn up a new plan, beginning with a misinformation campaign by the Iranian regime in which officials of the regime make some reassuring statements toward Saudi Arabia and other Arabian Gulf states.

Such statements aim to spread an atmosphere of optimism in an attempt to ease the precautionary and security measures to be taken by the Saudi authorities during the pilgrimage season, with a view to peddling the so-called alternative plan. This plan comprises a set of options adopted by the Iranian Black Room to implement sedition and riots in Saudi Arabia.

The paper affirms that among the options now under consideration by the Iranian regime, particularly after Saudi Arabia severed relations with it, is to dispatch special elements that were trained in a special camp near Tehran along with recruited mercenaries, who hold Arab and Islamic passports, to Saudi Arabia on the pretext of performing the pilgrimage.

The new Iranian plan also includes attacking Saudi targets abroad and sending planes carrying Iranians which may forcibly land in Saudi airports on the pretext that these Iranians are pilgrims who wish to perform pilgrimage.

The goal of this is to create as much media clamor as possible in case they are forcibly prevented from doing so by the Saudi authorities. The newspaper AL-MUHARRIR points out that the Iranian plan also includes providing some Iranian pilgrims with weapons which may be brought in through the airports as well as carrying out infiltration operations into Saudi territory by land.

Paper Cited on Al-Asad's 'Treasonous Stands'

JN1905093588 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0733 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Baghdad, 19 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH has affirmed that Hafiz al-Asad's crimes and stands are nothing but an example of fascist, Nazi, and conspiratorial crimes.

The newspaper, which is published by the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, said in an article here today that Hafiz al-Asad's treasonous stands, whether on the question of Palestine, the Arab-Zionist conflict or the Iraqi victory over his ally, Khomeyni, deny him any national or pan-Arab qualities and expose his allegations, claims, and lies.

The newspaper added that Hafiz al-Asad's stands always place him in the position of the accused, the convicted and the criminal, not only because he has not fired a single shot in the direction of the Zionist enemy since he signed the peace and non-aggression agreement in 1974, but also because he has committed the ugliest crimes against the Palestinian national struggle and all other Arab struggle issues, in fact, against the Syrian people themselves in the massacres at Hamah, Aleppo, Damascus, and Palmyra prison.

Communique No 3,183 Details 18-19 May Combat

JN1905163988 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 May 88

[Communique No 3,183 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 19 May]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our forces continued their combat activities last night and today as follows:

1. Our Air Force has carried out raids on the scoundrels' concentrations and gun emplacements. Through 79 combat missions, they inflicted further losses on them. After the raids, all our planes returned safely to base. Praise be to God.

2. Our daring Army helicopter gunships carried out 61 combat missions in the sectors of operation. Through these missions, they inflicted on our country's enemies new losses in personnel and equipment. Our helicopters then returned safely to base.

3. Fourteen scoundrels were killed, 2 vehicles loaded with personnel and a grader [preceding word in English] were destroyed, and an ammunition dump was blown up in the I Army Corps northern sector.

4. Two gun emplacements and three infantry positions were destroyed, an ammunition dump was blown up, and two enemy personnel were killed in the II Army Corps central sector, and three other positions were destroyed and their personnel were killed or wounded in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah.

5. Four enemy personnel were killed in the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan and two personnel were killed and a 106-mm gun was destroyed in the V Army Corps northern sector.

6. Three machinegun emplacements and four infantry positions were destroyed in the VI Army Corps sector east of Tigris. Also an ammunition dump was blown up and a vehicle, four infantry positions, and a gun emplacement were destroyed in the VII Army Corps sector.

7. The criminal Iranian regime shelled the Bimalik housing complex today with long-range artillery. The enemy shelling caused civilian losses and damaged civilian property.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 19 May 1988

Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz Visits GDR

For Berlin ADN and NEUES DEUTSCHLAND accounts of the visit to the German Democratic Republic by Tariq 'Aziz, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Iraq, including his meetings with Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) Politburo members Erich Honecker, general secretary of the SED Central Committee and chairman of the GDR Council of State, and Willi Stoph, chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers, as well as with Oskar Fischer, SED Central Committee member and minister of foreign affairs, please see the GDR section of the 16 May 1988 East Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Shamir on Peres Trip, Shultz Plan, Soviet Ties
TA2005042288 Jerusalem Television Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 May 88

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Me'ir Kohen and Arab affairs correspondent Shlomo Ganor on 19 May in Jerusalem—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Kohen] Good evening, Mr Prime Minister.

[Shamir] Good evening.

[Kohen] We will be discussing several issues: the political process in the region, the situation in the territories, and other topics. Of course, we will want to hear your comments on these issues.

At the end of the foreign minister's talks in Washington, the White House issued a statement criticizing leaders who reject new ideas and prevent any progress in the peace process. What is your reaction to this statement?

[Shamir] Well, I do not usually argue in public with friendly governments, and I think this is one expression of friendly relations between countries. If there is anything to argue about, the arguments should be conducted in normal contacts between officials of the countries involved. It is not customary to argue in public.

[Kohen] Do you believe the criticism was directed at you personally?

[Shamir] I do not think so. I have no reason to think so. That is not the main problem, however, which is how to solve the problems of the region and how to overcome the differences between the sides. There is no question of criticizing one person or another. It is the issues, rather than the people, that are important.

[Ganor] Still, Mr Prime Minister, the statement gave marks to leaders. You and others were called rejectionists, whereas the foreign minister was praised for, and I quote, his positive approaches. Does this not represent U.S. intervention in Israel's internal affairs?

[Shamir] U.S. policy, as expressed on more than one occasion by administration leaders, has been not to intervene in political arguments in Israel. I hope they remain faithful to this precept and will continue not to intervene.

[Ganor] Do you approve of the United States giving marks, Mr Prime Minister?

[Shamir] Well, it is a matter of taste, and it is not for me to comment on this.

[Ganor] Was it in good or poor taste?

[Shamir] It is a matter of personal taste as it is perceived in different countries.

[Kohen] Sir, how do you feel about the criticism leveled by some Likud ministers in connection with the foreign minister's talks in Washington?

[Shamir] I have stated my position on arguments with other countries, even the most friendly ones: It is best not to argue in public. We have many other occasions to express our views. As for internal arguments with rival parties, we can have them every day without linking them to ongoing discussions with other countries.

[Ganor] Deputy Prime Minister David Levi yesterday suggested that you recall the vice prime minister to Israel.

[Shamir] I do not usually report my talks with my friends and colleagues in the cabinet.

[Ganor] Are you going to recall the foreign minister?

[Shamir] I have not done so.

[Kohen] Sir, do you think the U.S. Administration is trying to pressure Israel, particularly on the eve of the U.S. secretary of state's visit and your upcoming visit to the United States?

[Shamir] No, it is not the policy or the modus operandi of the U.S. Administration to exert pressure. It prefers persuasion. More than once, when Arab leaders urged them to pressure Israel, Secretary of State Shultz told them: This is not how we work, we will not do that. I hope Shultz will abide by these words.

[Ganor] Sir, the United States still considers the Shultz plan the only realistic basis for promoting a solution in the region. This being the case, are you going to reevaluate your position on the Shultz plan?

[Shamir] What the Americans say is not new. This is a proposal named after the secretary of state, and they are trying to get the Middle East countries to agree to it. As far as I am concerned, the best existing proposal for a solution to the problems of the region, particularly for settling the Arab-Israeli conflict, is the Camp David plan.

So far, there has been no better or more realistic plan either in the region or in the international arena. Therefore, I would propose that all the sides carefully reexamine this plan and try to make another effort to convene the sides for discussions and negotiations based on the Camp David plan.

[Kohen] Mr Prime Minister, you did not categorically reject the Shultz plan, but merely objected to certain clauses. Could you elaborate on those parts of the plan you objected to and why?

[Shamir] I welcomed the efforts of the U.S. Administration, and Secretary of State Shultz in particular, to invest experience and strength in a solution to the conflict. The United States deserves to be praised for this. I also welcomed the U.S. attempt to build its proposals in line with the Camp David Accords, but I cannot and will not accept those points that diverge from the Camp David Accords.

[Ganor] Such as?

[Shamir] Such as an international conference, which was not mentioned at all in the Camp David Accords; such as the proposal that negotiations on the permanent arrangements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza should begin before the implementation of the interim arrangements. Not only does this run counter to the Camp David Accords, but it also defies their internal logic. therefore, I think this is not feasible.

There are other points, which we will obviously discuss when the U.S. secretary of state arrives at the beginning of next month. Perhaps he will have something to tell us. Perhaps he will tell us about other contacts at the Moscow summit scheduled for the end of this month.

[Ganor] According to the U.S. view, the rejection of the Shultz plan—or at least half of it—means that extremist elements in the region will be strengthened, which might bring about a deterioration in the situation. Is there a third alternative?

[Shamir] Nobody can say this is the plan, there is no other, and you must accept it. First and foremost, the plan must be feasible. It must be acceptable to all sides, and it must provide an answer to the problems. I say the Camp David Accords are an alternative.

The secretary of state himself says he has not received a positive answer for this plan from any of the sides, not just Israel. Not one of the Arab elements has given a positive response yet. Therefore, nobody can say the dilemma is between accepting this plan or radicalization. Radicalization exists anyway, but there also exists a wish among certain circles in the region to make some kind of progress toward peace. The political formula must be found to express these existing trends.

[Kohen] Sir, you mentioned the summit scheduled for the end of the month in Moscow. Are the superpowers likely to arrive at an agreement on the Middle East issue?

[Shamir] There are efforts and discussions under way. One must bear in mind that the Middle East is not at the top of the agenda, and that the summit will deal with very important global issues. The Middle East issue may be discussed, and on this question there are many differences between the Soviet Union and the United States. They are not very likely to overcome these differences. What I fear is that they will make a compromise at our expense.

[Ganor] Do you feel that the Soviets have recently toned down their position toward Israel and the Middle East conflict?

[Shamir] Actually, I do not yet see a substantial change in the Soviet position. The Soviet Union excels in being consistent in its positions, for better or worse, and rarely changes them.

I would like to see the Soviets change their position toward establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. I do not see any change in this respect. I would like to see a change concerning Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. The figures I received do not herald any significant change. Some 1,400 Jews will leave this month while 1,088 left last month. These figures are not impressive if one considers that there are 2 million Jews in the Soviet Union. In the past, 3,000 Jews or more emigrated without negotiations or U.S. pressure.

[Kohen] You are scheduled to confer with the Soviet foreign minister in New York. What will you tell him about the conditions for the Soviet Union's participation in the political process?

[Shamir] I want to meet Soviet representatives, and certainly want to confer with Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. I will explain to him Israel's and my own position that normal relations must be established first.

[Ganor] Could one term the meeting between the foreign minister and the Soviet ambassador in Washington yesterday as normal?

[Shamir] Is that normal relations? That a foreign minister should meet an ambassador accredited to a third country is not normal at all. If the foreign minister were to meet the Soviet ambassador in Israel, that would be normal. The very fact that such a meeting took place proves that the situation is abnormal.

The Soviets also admit that the current state of relations is abnormal. So first of all, normal relations must be established and an agreement must be reached about Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. Only later should negotiations be held on our mutual positions regarding Middle East problems. It is very important to have such discussions to bring positions and views closer.

[Kohen] Mr Prime Minister, King Husayn has said on more than one occasion that he has no intention of speaking for the Palestinians. What is your reaction to this statement? Does it suggest that you can talk only to the PLO?

[Shamir] We have heard many statements on this issue by King Husayn. The differences between the various statements depends on the change in the situation. In my opinion, what he says today stems from the situation in

Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. I would say that if negotiations were to take place, it would be best to hold them both with Husayn on behalf of Jordan and with Palestinian representatives. The reason for this is quite simple: First of all, we do have something to talk about with Jordan, with whom we have a long border and with whom we must reach a formal peace.

Second, there is a strong link between Jordan and the Palestinians. After all, it is a well-known fact that most of Jordan's population is made up of Palestinian Arabs. Therefore, it would be best to hold negotiations with both of them. In that case it would be much easier to arrive at some kind of understanding.

[Ganor] Mr Prime Minister, if I understand you correctly, you still consider the Jordanian option a realistic one?

[Shamir] There is no question of a Jordanian option. All this talk about a Jordanian option is very exaggerated. I say we must talk with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation in order to solve the so-called Palestinian problem and reach peace with Jordan. This should be done on the basis of the Camp David Accords, because these accords state that negotiations should be held both with Jordan and with representatives of the Palestinian Arabs.

[Ganor] But Amman does not consider itself committed to the Camp David Accords.

[Shamir] That is right, but we can conduct negotiations on the basis of these accords. These accords are binding on us, not them, but that should not prevent Jordan from agreeing to them.

[Ganor] Perhaps an international conference could be a solution?

[Shamir] I think an international conference is not a solution, but an anti-solution. An international conference is the antithesis of direct negotiations. An international conference drives us away from direct negotiations instead of bringing them closer to us. It introduces extraneous elements into the region, it complicates the issue, it makes negotiations more cumbersome. In my opinion, and this was also the position of the U.S. authorities until not long ago, the best way is direct negotiations.

[Ganor] Despite the agreements between Jordan and Israel specified in the London document?

[Shamir] What is the London document? Who remembers it? It is archaic. Many things have happened since then. Everybody in the Arab world and Europe will tell you that an international conference is necessary to bring about Israel's withdrawal to the 1967 borders. This is an axiom for them. Those who are not interested in such a development must put as much distance as possible between themselves and an international conference.

[Kohen] We will now go to the situation in the territories. Six months after the outbreak of the riots in the territories, can you make an initial evaluation? How do you see the situation at present?

[Shamir] The violence seems to be subsiding. I welcome this because violence does not do anybody, neither us nor the Arabs, any good. I think that an increasing number of Arabs in the territories realize that violence leads nowhere and keeps us from an understanding and negotiations, and consequently, it must end. I have heard rumors saying that some think that if the violence ends, Israel will take its revenge on all those responsible for it. This is absolutely false.

On the contrary, the State of Israel will welcome a return to normal life and will not take revenge on anybody. The situation will improve considerably since we want the condition of the inhabitants of these areas to be as good as possible. We want them to live a dignified and prosperous life. This is what we want, and herein lies our common interest.

[Ganor] Mr Prime Minister, most Palestinians in the region are watching you this minute. What hope can you give them? What can you tell them?

[Shamir] We want to arrive at an understanding with them. There is a conflict and differences of opinion between us that we do not want to settle through violence. Only a few minutes ago I said that we want and are interested in negotiations to solve this problem. The Palestinians, together with the Jordanians—as well as the Egyptians, in line with the Camp David Accords—must take part in those negotiations.

By taking part in such negotiations the Palestinians would be sharing the decision about their future, which is what they want. The autonomy to be granted them in line with these accords would move them forward and raise their standard of living, not only economically but also politically. I am very sorry that the Egyptians terminated the autonomy negotiations, thus causing a great loss of time. Had they not terminated the talks, perhaps today we could have been near a solution or at the last stages before a solution to the problem.

So, let us not waste time once again. Let us resume the negotiations and make progress.

[Kohen] Sir, practically speaking, if a leadership willing to talk with Israel were to emerge as a result of the uprising in the territories, would you be prepared to sit and talk with them?

[Shamir] I am always prepared to talk. That is no problem. I do not know what leadership or conditions would emerge. In any event, however, we look forward to

negotiations and understanding, simply because it is clear to us, just as it is to them, that we must live together in this land. If we are fated to live together, it is best to live together in peace.

[Ganor] Sir, the events in the territories are the reason for the Arab summit meeting scheduled for next month. Do you expect a worsening of the radical line in the Arab world?

[Shamir] I would not expect such a development, but it could turn out that way. Usually we do not expect anything positive to come out of Arab summit meetings. But this is up to them.

[Kohen] Mr Prime Minister, you reacted favorably to the remarks of the Egyptian president, who called on the Arab countries to enter direct negotiations with Israel. Should this statement be seen as a change in the Egyptian position?

[Shamir] I saw part of a report on an interview with President Mubarak, but I did not read all of it. The interview could include views that are unacceptable to me, but I accept what I read about his positive comments on direct negotiations. In all my appeals to the Egyptian president I reiterated: Let us proceed to promote direct negotiations. This is the right way.

[Kohen] In addition to your positive reaction to President Mubarak's remarks, did you directly approach him to help promote the idea he proposed?

[Shamir] Not in the last few days; as I said before, I did not read the whole interview. I have heard that it includes some points that are not all that acceptable to him, but I have approached him on previous occasions and proposed having in-depth talks and discussions about a solution to the problems and the conflict with the entire Arab world.

[Ganor] The Tabah arbitration decision is scheduled for the end of the month. Is there still a chance that Israel and Egypt will solve this problem through conciliation?

[Shamir] In my opinion, such a chance always exists. As you know, for years I have believed that the problem must be solved through conciliation. This is the best way to solve problems between neighbors who want to live in peace. The Egyptians, however, insisted on arbitration. We agreed to arbitration, as a result of U.S. influence, on the condition that we could resort to conciliation halfway through the process. We recently told the Egyptians that if they were interested in conciliation we could tell the arbiters to try to arrive at a compromise. If this failed they could go on with the arbitration.

[Ganor] What is the present situation?

[Shamir] The Egyptians have not yet accepted our proposals, and the arbiters are going ahead with their job.

[Kohen] Sir, relations between Israel and Egypt have gone through many changes. What are you doing to strengthen the only relations between Israel and an Arab country?

[Shamir] We are constantly working for further normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt. The existence of a peace treaty is not enough. Relations must include close economic, social, and cultural ties in order to strengthen and solidify peace. The Egyptian Government is not thrilled with the course of normalization, and agreement can only be reached with the two sides' consent.

[Kohen] Our program has reached its end. Mr Prime Minister, thank you very much for coming to our studio.

Peres Views U.S. Visit, 'Progress' With Soviets

TA1905181388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 19 May 88

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Jonathan Shachter on 19 May in New York—recorded]

[Shachter] Foreign Minister Peres says he is not at all concerned about the criticism leveled at him in a Radio Moscow broadcast, which said he rejected peace with the Arabs.

[Peres] I reacted favorably, because when I consider what some of the Likud people are saying about me, and Radio Moscow is saying about me, I find that I am at the right place.

[Shachter] The foreign minister said his job is to hold talks with the Soviets, and notwithstanding comments by Radio Moscow, the negotiations will continue. The only way to judge the situation is by facts and deeds, and the facts are there are more exit visas being issued to Jews, and there has been movement in the Soviet position regarding a formula for an international peace conference. Peres conceded there were still obstacles between the positions of Israel and the Soviet Union, but he told me his past 1 and 1/2 weeks abroad have resulted in progress.

[Peres] I think that we have intensified our dialogue with the Soviet Union. It is to our interest, and to the interest of peace. I think we have coordinated a continued effort of the peace process with the United States of America. I think I was given an ample opportunity to put the Israeli position in a light which I think is best for our country.

[Shachter] Peres deflected criticism by Prime Minister Shamir over his meeting Tuesday with Soviet U.S. Ambassador Yuriy Dubinin. Shamir told Israel's Arabic television a short time ago that the meeting should rather have been held in Jerusalem. Peres responded: He would certainly have agreed, if only that were possible.

[Peres] I am all for it. I think Prime Minister Shamir has invited Mr Shevardnadze to come to Jerusalem. I second this proposal, and when he comes, we shall meet him in Jerusalem.

Dubinin on Soviet Stand on Mideast Settlement

TA1905151988 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 19 May 88 pp 1, 2

[Report by Dalya Shehori and U.S. correspondent Dalya Refa'el]

[Excerpts] Washington—The Soviets have dropped their demand for an authoritative and coercive international conference, as well as a continuing conference during the peace negotiations. This information was relayed by sources in the foreign minister's entourage, following Peres' meeting with Soviet Ambassador Yuriy Dubinin, last Tuesday night. [passage omitted]

Dubinin prefaced his remarks by saying that the missile pact with the United States and the agreement on the withdrawal from Afghanistan are proof that the Soviets want a solution to regional conflicts and an improved world atmosphere. He added that the Soviet Union regards other regional problems in the same spirit. He assured Israel that Moscow is willing and determined to act on a solution in the Middle East. Dubinin said he was satisfied with the lack of skepticism in Peres' remarks over this matter.

"As a superpower with comprehensive responsibility, and as the region's neighbor, the Soviet Union would like to see a settlement in the Middle East," said Dubinin. He also noted the Soviet Union's concern over the recent introduction of tactical missiles and chemical warheads into the area.

Dubinin dictated the Soviet stand from a written document:

Self-determination for the Palestinians, although this can be implemented in the framework of a confederation.

Each party's security requirements.

Nonintervention in all countries' interior affairs.

Regard for the sovereignty of all countries.

Abstaining from using force in settling conflicts.

The basis for a territorial settlement—Resolutions 242 and 338, and the principle of territories for peace.

The best mechanism for the conflict's solution—an international conference.

The legal basis—the acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338 by all parties concerned.

Representation will be granted to all parties to the conflict, including Palestinian Arabs.

The negotiations will be conducted in three forums: the conference plenum; multipartite groups for discussing regional conflicts; and bipartite groups, with the participation of Israel and its neighbors, for solving the conflict between them.

The Security Council permanent members' role will be to create "an atmosphere conducive to negotiations."

The Soviet Union accepts the possibility of interim stages in solving the conflict, as long as they relate to the final settlement.

After the presentation of the Soviet stand, the issues were discussed. Minister Peres explained why the Soviet self-determination formula (which means, in fact, the establishment of a Palestinian state) cannot be accepted by Israel. Referring to the Soviet proposal, Peres also suggested that the Soviets omit several clauses unacceptable to the parties, which will "merely delay the process." The sources have not specified which clauses Minister Peres meant. [passage omitted]

Human Rights Commission Proposed for Territories

TA2005043688 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Foreign Ministry Political Director General Yosi Beilin says he has proposed the setting up of a special commission to deal with complaints about human rights violations in the territories. The proposal was made by Beilin in his talks with State Department officials in Washington. The officials sharply criticized Israel's actions in the territories and charged that human rights violations have become policy.

Beilin Clarifies Issue

TA2005064088 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 20 May 88

[Telephone interview with Dr Yosi Beilin, political director general of the Foreign Ministry, by moderator David Grossman; place not given—live]

[Text] [Grossman] Dr Beilin, good morning to you. We heard the report on your proposal, but it seems you are coming to tell us something different.

[Beilin] Yes. I very much regret the airing of that report without having been consulted about it. It is very inaccurate. The truth is totally different. I was summoned for a talk in the U.S. State Department with Dick Schifter who is the assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, as well as with Dick Murphy, the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs. They raised a problem they have to the effect that complaints they submit or questions that they pose on the issue of human rights in the territories are sometimes not answered for a very long while.

They asked that a joint senior-level Israeli-U.S. committee be set up to handle this matter. I told them that this is impossible. It is understandable that they would occasionally pose questions, particularly concerning U.S. citizens, but a joint Israeli-U.S. committee on this issue cannot be established.

[Grossman] What was agreed upon then? What can be established?

[Beilin] I told them that upon my return home I was definitely prepared to raise a proposal before the authoritative elements for closer cooperation on the matter of their questions and answers between the offices concerned. I did not talk about a mechanism or a special body that does not exist. The entire story of a mechanism which will handle this issue is unfounded, neither did I propose such a mechanism.

I only said that I was prepared to look into the matter. We acted similarly in the past with regard to other issues raised by the Americans, without the participation of the Americans themselves. Instead, we effected a closer coordination between offices concerned in order to supply answers to questions.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 20 May adds that "the Foreign Ministry's spokesman made it clear that the United States proposed the establishment of a joint Israeli-U.S. committee to look into complaints on human rights, but that Dr Beilin rejected this proposal, suggesting instead that coordination in handling these complaints in Israel be improved. The Foreign Ministry's spokesman denies that there is a dispute with the Defense Ministry on this matter."].

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories

Roundup of Incidents 18 May

TA1905181988 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 19 May 88 p 2

[Report by Roni Shaqed]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] A demonstration was held yesterday in the old city of Nabulus in an attempt to bring the uprising back to life. Arab sources report that a group of 1,000 youths staged a march, carrying PLO flags and chanting slogans.

Military sources report a demonstration held by several dozen youths carrying flags. IDF soldiers fired at the demonstrators' feet while dispersing the demonstration.

Another large demonstration took place in the Balatah refugee camp near Nabulus. Some 150 masked youths flew Palestinian flags and marched toward the main street. The demonstration was dispersed by tear gas and rubber bullets. [passage omitted]

The Civilian Administration in Tulkarm today will issue 16 permits for family reunions. This step is meant to make clear that the Civilian Administration is continuing its routine activities.

Riots took place in the Ayda refugee camp near Bethlehem yesterday. Residents of the camp buried a man whose body was found some 3 days ago in Moshav Bet Me'ir. PLO flags were hoisted during the funeral procession and youths from the camp got into a fistfight with an IDF unit. A young Arab woman was hit in the jaw by a rubber bullet. She was treated in the local hospital and released. PLO flags were also hoisted in Hebron yesterday.

Detention Chief Appointed

TA1905173888 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1605 GMT 19 May 88

[Excerpts] The IDF has decided to appoint an officer in charge of detentions in Judaea and Samaria. The department's goal is to prevent irregularities. The IDF is also reorganizing Judaea and Samaria jails. This information was relayed today to Center Movement leaders who toured Judaea and Samaria and met with the area commander. Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports:

[Begin recording] To increase supervision, the IDF recently appointed an officer in charge of detention in Judaea and Samaria prisons. Detention arrangements were altered following the closing of Ramallah's 'Ofer detention center, and rioters will henceforth be sent to Al-Zahiriyah and Al-Fari'ah prisons. Persons detained until the end of proceedings will be locked up in the Megiddo prison. All those charged with hostile terrorist activities will be sent to Shin Bet institutions, Tulkarm prisons, and the central Judaea and Samaria prison. [passage omitted]

It has also been learned that the IDF recently arrested several Arab children under the age of 14 from the Balatah refugee camp, who are suspected of manufacturing weapons used in attacks on collaborators. [end recording]

Link Seen in Solution to Tabah, Territories

TA1805155988 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 18 May 88 p 6

[Commentary by Pinhas 'Inbari: "Tabah First"]

[Text] Tabah is becoming a laboratory for West Bank and Gaza political formulas. This is how we should view the struggle for Tabah, which in fact is being waged not between Israel and Egypt, but between the Israeli Foreign Ministry and the prime minister's office.

The Tabah settlement principles resemble the components of a West Bank arrangement to a tee and the Foreign Ministry would be happy to implement them in the territories as well. The reservations of the prime minister's office about this arrangement could also be applied to Judaea and Samaria. Egypt's support in principle for conciliation on the Tabah issue may well be an encouraging signal, heralding Egypt's attitude to the West Bank issue.

What were the components of the arrangement proposed by U.S. diplomat Abraham Sofaer? The recognition of Egyptian sovereignty over the territory, along with Israeli interests: the tourist village and the hotel to remain on the site; the Egyptian flag to be hoisted; the Egyptian police, but not the Army, to be permitted entry; and an open border maintained for Israelis. This is the functional arrangement in principle envisioned for the West Bank. The tourist village and the hotel are the Jewish settlements, and the hotel's joint management reflects the joint administration of the territories.

Anyone wishing to apply these principles to the West Bank must first try them out in "laboratory conditions," since it is impossible to promote any new idea in the West Bank's close atmosphere. It appears, however, that the prime minister's office has also realized that the Tabah talks are in fact intended for Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. Following those talks, they foiled a Tabah compromise by raising the issue that is also hindering the political process in the territories: the issue of sovereignty. "If an Israeli commits a crime in Tabah, where will he be tried, in Egypt or Israel?" This was asked by Yosi Ben-Aharon, director of the prime minister's office, who received no reply.

It is true that the Sofaer proposals mention Egyptian sovereignty over Tabah, but sovereignty itself, which would be achieved while taking Israel's interests into consideration, was left open for negotiations according to the various functional formulas, just as the implementation of Arab sovereignty in the territories was, being bound up with Israel's interests. To avoid creating difficulties for the Arabs, the Foreign Ministry talked of interim settlements that would postpone the debate on sovereignty to a more convenient date. To abort the idea, the prime minister's office exerted pressure to bring the debate on sovereignty forward: both on the Tabah issue and on the future of the territories.

Thus, all those in favor of functional settlements in the West Bank and Gaza will be unhappy about the negative development on the Tabah issue, as its far-reaching consequences will certainly affect the territories. As things stand today, the insistence on the question of sovereignty is certain to return the issue to the arbitrators. As far as could be ascertained, however, those elements who wish to experiment in Tabah with formulas intended for later use in the territories will do their best to put off the publication of the arbitration panel's decision until after the Israeli elections, in order to leave an opening for further attempts at conciliation.

As a matter of fact, the Tabah issue has always been related to the Palestinian question, although it should be stressed that in essence it is a bilateral Israeli-Egyptian problem. The issue was created to keep Egypt busy with its relations with Israel and its attention and energies away from the Palestinian issue, while leaving Israel free to approach with relatively unoccupied hands the execution of its post-Camp David Palestinian policies—in other words, a massive land grab in the territories and a "war against the PLO"—at first in the territories, later in Lebanon, and now in the territories again.

Israel often accuses Egypt of cooling the peace while concealing the Israeli interest in maintaining a chilly peace, for warm relations with Egypt can only be a direct result of Israeli compliance with the Egyptian line on the Palestinian issue. If we are to draw conclusions from Egypt's approach to the Tabah question, it is possible that Egypt will also support those functional arrangements that are compatible with the Palestinians' rights to self-determination and are accepted by them.

To make these arrangements equally acceptable to Israel, the Egyptians found it vital not to deal with the Palestinian issue while the trauma of the Yamit demolition was still vivid, but rather against the background of a Tabah solution through an arrangement with Israel.

The only functional solution that can satisfy Palestinian demands and also be acceptable to Israel is a confederation. The recent Brookings Institute report, which helps formulate U.S. policy on Middle East problems, also deals with with a solution through confederation, which perhaps explains Abraham Sofaer's willingness to act for a solution of the Palestinian problem along these lines, after it is tried out in Tabah.

While the Israeli Foreign Ministry is ready to accept this kind of solution, Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin opposes it, since it involves negotiations with the PLO and will weaken Jordan's status in the West Bank. Opinions in the prime minister's office vary. While Director Yosi Ben-Aharon probably objects, other elements close to the prime minister, like Dan Meridor, are willing to consider this kind of arrangement.

Similar functional arrangement formulas exist in Lebanon, and it would be logical to assume that Israel would be likely to support them there, of all places. The solution mentioned for Lebanon is cantonal in nature, and is parallel to the confederative solution in the territories. For Israel a cantonal solution in Lebanon is preferable, since it contains the possibility of solving the Lebanese Palestinian problem by means of a Palestinian canton to be naturally connected to the Palestinian state as part of the confederative settlements in Greater Israel.

The main element supporting this solution is the Druze. This also serves another Israeli interest, that of siding with the Lebanese Druze as part of Israel's special relations with the Druze citizens of Israel—at the same time removing the tough dilemma the Israeli Druze faced during the Lebanon war, when Israel fought on the side of their enemies, the Phalangists.

Despite all the above factors, Israel is not taking advantage of the influence it still has in Lebanon to promote this solution. It associates, instead, with Lebanese forces

who oppose Lebanon's partition into cantons—in other words, the Shi'ites on one hand; on the other, the radical Christians, who lament the bygone days in which they ruled over Lebanon.

The Maydun operation was connected to developments in Lebanon, and its connection with the Palestinian problem, although it exists, is less obvious. The defense minister has declared that the Hizballah and PLO have become allies. This statement is quite correct, the PLO's pragmatic attitude reflecting the Arab wisdom: my enemy's enemy is my friend. Their main Shi'ite force in the PLO was the Amal militia, which is also Hizoallah's foe. The connection with the Hizballah was vital to the PLO for it to withstand the Amal pressure, which served the same end as the Israeli pressure on the PLO in the territories and the pressure coordinated with Jordan in the pre-uprising era. This is the common denominator in both the territories and Lebanon: the objection to any idea, functional or otherwise, if attached to negotiations with the PLO.

Israel's real interest in Lebanon lies in coming to the Palestinians' aid, in helping them become part of Lebanon. Israel is crushing their roots in Lebanon, and the day of payment will not be far off. After the aborted "ship of return," the Palestinians are considering marching from the shelled and starved refugee camps to the Israeli borders. The harder the pressures on the Palestinians—exerted with our unkind help—the more chance their plans have to succeed. Only then will Israel curse itself for its folly.

Ministers Cited on Economic Effects of 'Uprising'

TA1405040988 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (Shiv'a Yamim supplement) in Hebrew 13 May 88 pp 34-36

[Article by Arye Avneri: "Intifadha—The Economic Aspect: This Business Has Cost Us 800 Million Shekels So Far"]

[Summary] How much has the uprising in the territories cost us so far? In February, Economy and Planning Minister Gad Ya'aqobi estimated the immediate cost at about 0.5 billion Israeli shekels, including expenditures incurred by the IDF and police, import and export losses, and so on. A few days ago Ya'aqobi apologized for these figures. "According to recent calculations, the cost has now reached 800 million shekels. The IDF has already spent 400 million shekels keeping the territories under control. Exports to the territories have dropped 250 million shekels, and there has been a decrease in tourism of over 20 percent."

A few weeks ago Deputy Finance Minister 'Adi Amoray said expenses would total only 100 million shekels, but lately he has refused to make further estimates. Independent financial experts said the "yearly loss might reach 200 million shekels."

Major Israeli industries have registered a drop in sales, some by 15 to 25 percent. A marketing executive said sales in the territories "are at rock bottom, and even if we could do business with some Arab villages, our drivers would refuse to go there."

"Today, 150 days into the uprising, the key question is whether there is a direct connection between events in the territories and signs of a recession in Israel." Jewish laborers are once again working in what used to be Arab jobs, workers are being recruited from other countries, industries are adjusting their calculations which had been based on cheap labor, and large companies are already searching for new export markets.

"In 1987, Israel exported goods worth about $950 million to the territories, roughly 10 percent of last year's total Israeli exports ($9.1 billion). Israel imported products worth $340 million from Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, or approximately 3 percent of total Israeli imports."

The events in the territories also endanger the fragile state budget. Finance Minister Moshe Nisim insists on adhering to the budget, but even he is aware of the additional burden placed on the defense authorities especially after the Lavi project was dropped, requiring substitutes. Just before the uprising started "the defense establishment decided to cut reserve duty to 42 days annually, and discharge men over 50 from service. Now it seems that the elderly will be discharged, but the younger men will serve over 60 days a year."

"Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin estimates the cost of the uprising at 400 million shekels in defense expenditures alone. He says that the IDF can supply no more then 150 million shekels out of its own resources." High-level Finance Ministry officials believe that the IDF will manage on its own budget, but further budgeting of defense expenditures is one of the main topics on the ministry's agenda.

Israeli police have also sent massive forces to the territories, despite limited manpower reserves and a budget far less flexible than the Defense Ministry's. The police affairs minister announced he will demand additional funds, but did not specify an exact figure. The Finance Ministry knows it will eventually have to supply the funds. Its main concern is that other ministries will demand additional monies "to adapt to the new situation".

Construction and Housing Minister David Levi "is pressing for the completion of various construction projects in Judaea and Samaria, even though settling in the territories has almost stopped and builders are stuck with apartments no one would buy." Levi also wants to pave roads along the Green Line "to increase the feeling of security." "David Levi is in charge of the construction sector which, among the economic sectors that largely

rely on Arab labor, has suffered the most. Some 46 percent of the 110,000 Arab workers are employed by building contractors. Their absence delays the completion of many houses."

Minister Ari'el Sharon has a dilemma. As industry and trade minister his duty is to prevent such damage. As one of the Likud leaders, he does not wish to compromise with the Arabs. He believes that the economic damage "in terms of consumption (food, textiles, etc.) is low, but a little more serious in terms of construction output due to a recent drop in construction in Israel." Other economic sectors are trying to "hitch a ride" on the situation, hoping to get government assistance for their own private troubles.

Banks seem not to be affected by the situation. The total of bounced checks is estimated at $50 to $60 million. "This is a complicated issue and has not yet been resolved. Most merchants are currently returning to cash deals."

Israel's economy sustained a direct hit as a result of the recent EEC decision which discriminates against Israel for what was referred to as "Israel's behavior in the territories." This decision "will cause a loss of $30 million a year and is a dangerous precursor of what might happen should other international organizations decide to punish Israel." Some European countries suggested direct agricultural exports from the territories to Europe. This would be impossible, however, due to the absence of infrastructure. Any Arab who attempted to go ahead with such a notion would only lose money. "By the way, direct Arab agricultural exports through the Jordan River bridges reaches Iraq and Syria, totaling some 170,000 tons this year."

The effect on tourism cannot be estimated yet. "Travel agencies and hotels have reported drops in reservations, but updated figures note a 3-percent increase in the number of passengers using Ben-Gurion Airport compared to the same period last year. There has been a 2-percent drop in the number of people crossing the Jordan River bridges."

Prominent economic figures are not yet ready to say that Israel is on the verge of a recession. "Professor Mikha'el Bruno, Bank of Israel governor, says that economic relations with the territories must be seen in the right proportion. Business with the territories makes up only 1 to 1.5 percent of Israel's GNP."

The standard of living in the territories has risen in the past 20 years, approaching that of Israel's Arabs, but the gap separating the territories from Israel's Jewish population is still wide due to the quick rise in the latter's standard of living. "According to updated research, the general standard of living in Israel is three times higher than that of Arabs in Judaea and Samaria, and nine times higher than that of Gazans." Officials are worried by the increasing degree of collaboration between Arabs on both sides of the Green Line. They say they are surprised at the extent Israel's Arabs are willing to suffer economic hardships for the cause of the Palestinian struggle."

Recent steps taken by defense authorities such as cutting off phones, electricity, and gasoline supplies also hinder economic activity in the territories. Experts say that "the deliberate reduction in the number of Arabs from Gaza allowed to work in Israel—this labor provides 50 percent of Gaza's income—could turn it into a hot powder keg."

In the past 2 weeks the situation seems to be returning to normal. There are fewer curfews, and phone connections and gasoline supplies have resumed. The population in the territories realizes, however, that a new situation has emerged. "The income tax squads stationed at roadblocks on the way to Israel are an instructive example. Any self-employed Arab has to produce a certificate from the Civilian Administration that his taxes have been paid according to law. The overly flexible policy on this issue is gone.

"But there are two sides to the coin. Previously, large sums of money paid by Israeli employers to their Arab workers had been retained in Israel. Lately, however, various elements on the other side of the Green Line have been demanding that these sums be deposited in special Arab funds."

Statistics show that in 1987 the territories' GNP was about $1 billion and its revenues amounted to $1.5 billion, a third of which comes from labor in Israel.

"People in the territories realize that the damage might be both mutual and painful, but the final decision is probably not up to them."

Israeli Report on Border Infiltration Denied

JN1805102988 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Jordanian Information Minister Hani al-Khasawinah has denied the announcement by Israeli military sources of an infiltration by an armed fedayeen group into Israel via Jordan.

He stressed that Jordan's position in this regard is clear and that there is comprehensive surveillance along the border. He added that Jordan has not observed the infiltration or crossing of any persons.

He said the area is under constant surveillance by Jordanian armed units and no fedayeen are allowed to cross the border from Jordanian territory.

AL-RA'Y on Reagan's 'Optimism' After Peres Talks

JN1905080988 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 19 May 88 pp 1, 12

[Editorial: "The Causes of Our Optimism"]

[Text] President Reagan did not explain the reasons for the optimism that he expressed after his recent talks in Washington with Shim'on Peres on the Arab-Israeli conflict in light of the U.S. ideas that Shultz had carried to the region some weeks ago.

Regardless of the estimations that led the U.S. President to express his optimism, it is noted that these ideas still need development to become harmonious with the six principles that Jordan presented to Shultz.

It is also noted that Israel's intransigent position, which rejects the international conference, remains unchanged. Shamir recently renewed this position when he stated that this conference will not convene.

In light of these two points, Reagan's optimism has nothing to do with the visible reality so far. However, it can be said that the Arabs have their own causes of optimism.

These causes match the reality on the Arab scene. This reality is represented in the Arab consensus on the six principles, the absolute Arab rejection of all interim and partial solutions, and the Arab insistence that peace can only be achieved through the return of the land and through enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their own rights on their soil.

In another dimension, the reasons for Arab optimism are represented in the great national cohesion that ever grows and strengthens in this country, which stands steadfast on the longest confrontation line.

They are also represented in the absolute Jordanian and Palestinian rejection of the alternative homeland idea. In itself, this idea is a conspiracy against the Palestinian cause and people as well as against Jordan and the Jordanian people.

It goes without saying that our family with all its members, and our struggling kinfolk behind the wall of occupation, are aware of this conspiracy. They have all vowed to confront it firmly and strongly so that this country can remain the strong fortress that carries out its pioneering role in defending the Palestinian cause, and so that the Palestinians can regain their land and holy places and exercise their rights on their national soil.

In a third dimension, our reasons for optimism are represented in the continuation of the blessed uprising in the occupied territories, which has entered its 6th month despite the oppression and terrorism of the Israeli aggressors.

The uprising is the true Palestinian option that accepts no alternative to regaining the land and the holy places. It is the struggle option that emphasized the confidence that the Arabs can practice all options in defending the Arab existence and future and in laying the foundations of the long awaited peace.

These are the causes of our optimism, which we care about and are eager to promote. We believe that they will eventually triumph. They are the net effect of the pledge to which our family and our kinfolk behind the wall of occupation are committed—the pledge to liberate the land and the holy places, and the pledge of love and belonging to this steadfast country that will remain a model for national cohesion and pan-Arab commitment in the Arab arena.

Negotiations on Hostages' Release Continue

Kan'an Comments

NC2005102988 Paris AFP in English 1025 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Beirut, May 20 (AFP)—Syria is working for the release of foreign hostages held in Lebanon before its forces enter Beirut's embattled southern suburbs, Syrian General Ghazi Kan'an hinted in an interview with AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE.

"When we go in, we hope there will be no more hostages either in the suburbs or elsewhere," Gen. Kan'an, head of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon, said Thursday before leaving on a brief visit to Damascus.

Syria's intervention aimed at ending two weeks of fierce clashes in the southern suburbs between pro-Syrian and Iranian-backed Shi'ite militiamen could "facilitate" the release of the 15 foreign hostages believed held in the area, he said.

Gen. Kan'an's return to Damascus coincided with the arrival there Friday of Vernon Walters, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Mr. Walters' discussions with Syrian officials will cover the fate of the hostages, according to diplomatic sources in the Syrian capital.

Syrian and Iranian negotiators have been meeting here throughout the week in a bid to reach a political solution to the fighting in the suburbs. Well-informed sources said the parties have also discussed the hostages.

Iran's Offer Reportedly Rejected

NC2005062788 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0620 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] REUTER has quoted a major Islamic security source as saying that Iran has proposed handing over all the foreign hostages to Syria on the condition that the Syrian forces remain outside the southern suburb.

Damascus, however, rejected the offer, saying that the hostage issue does not take priority.

Canadian Arrives To Negotiate

NC2005092788 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] The Voice of Lebanon radio has learned that a Canadian named (Robert Barnett) secretly arrived in Lebanon through Juniyah port this morning on a mission connected with the U.S. hostages.

According to reports, (Barnett's) mission will take him to West Beirut in order to establish contact with Islamic Jihad and Hizballah, particularly with scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah.

It should be recalled that scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah had earlier called on the countries which have nationals being held hostage in Lebanon to negotiate directly with the hijackers.

Kan'an on Access Within Suburb, Hizballah Motives

NC2005124188 Paris AFP in English 1228 GMT 20 May 88

[Excerpt] Beirut, May 20 (AFP)—[Passage omitted] Gen. Kan'an, who is seen as Syria's "high commissioner" in Lebanon, Sunday announced his country's decision to intervene and halt the fighting, which has left more than 200 dead since May 6.

The decision followed the failure of initial mediation efforts and the "inability of the Iranians to discipline Hizballah," the general said.

Syria has since delayed its entry into the suburbs—from which a majority of the 300,000 to 500,000 population has fled—because of its attempts to accommodate Iran, political sources said.

Tehran is eager to avoid a solution that would deprive Hizballah, its main ally in Lebanon, of a power base and would lessen its influence over the country, they said.

"We shall decide which is the most appropriate moment for our entry," Gen. Kan'an told AFP. "When the Syrian Army has entered the suburbs, nobody will limit its freedom of action."

Gen. Kan'an said Hizballah had sparked the inter-Shi'ite fighting "our of fear" that it could suffer the same fate in the suburbs as in south Lebanon, from which it was driven out by Amal in early April.

Although the pro-Iranian group has approved of a "peaceful and limited" Syrian intervention, "there is still no solution for the moment" to the fighting, the general acknowledged.

Syria has called for armed militiamen, from both its Amal allies and Hizballah, to be withdrawn from the streets.

But Hizballah, which has driven out its rival from all but one district of the suburbs, is seen as unwilling to relinquish its gains on the ground without a political agreement, such as a return to south Lebanon.

"What happened (in south Lebanon) shows that the social environment was favourable to Amal, and the return of Hizballah depends on its ability to renew ties with the population," Gen. Kan'an commented.

On the Iranian presence in Lebanon, Gen. Kan'an said Iran had come "to participate in the struggle against Israel" and because of the religious and spiritual links between Tehran and the Lebanese Shi'ite community.

The general also denied reports that the United States and Syria, in recent contacts, had reached an agreement to eliminate the two most unyielding elements of Lebanon's sectarian strife—Hizballah on the Moslem side and the Christian militia, the Lebanese Forces.

There have been no negotiations between Syria and kidnappers of the Western hostages in Lebanon, Gen. Kan'an asserted, dismissing reports that the abductors had exerted pressure on Damascus to delay or even prevent a military intervention in the suburbs.

Syria has been cautious in its bid to quell the fighting in the southern suburbs because its intervention will leave Damascus directly involved in the question of the hostages, according to political sources.

A top Syrian military official was sent to Tehran on May 14 to discuss the hostages, security sources here said.

Tehran Reports on Besharati's Beirut Activities

Besharati on Syria, Hostages

LD1905082688 Tehran IRNA in English 0806 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Beirut, May 19, IRNA—Head of Lebanon's Amal movement Nabih Birri met for the second time with acting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Mohammad Besharati at the Iranian embassy here Wednesday.

Speaking after the meeting Birri said talks were within the framework of joint efforts to return peace and calm to Lebanon and described these efforts as positive and promising.

Birri said that both sides believe that all efforts should be directed at containing the crisis.

Bloody fighting between the Amal and Hezbollah forces in Beirut have left many casualties and Iran has worked to bring both sides to accept a cease-fire.

On his Tuesday meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, Birri said that meeting too was on the Amal-Hizbollah conflict.

Iranian acting foreign minister commenting on the meeting said the ongoing efforts have helped subside the tension and that they will continue.

He said that entry of Syrian troops to southern Lebanon will not solve the problem and that Syria's involvement in this crisis will distract it from the main issues. In addition arrival of Syrian troops will hinder efforts made for release of the Western hostages.

Southern Suburb Situation

NC2005071788 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 May 88

[Telephone report by an unidentified correspondent of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Beirut—recorded]

[Text] In continuation of the Islamic Republic's political efforts to prevent further bloodshed in Beirut's southern suburb, the results of which harm the interests of Islam and of the Muslims, Mr Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, our deputy foreign minister, met with Husayn al-Husayni, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber.

During this meeting, which also was attended by our ambassador to Lebanon, the most recent developments in Beirut's southern suburb were discussed. The conferees also reviewed the outcome of talks currently underway which seek to achieve a political solution to this region's crisis.

In this connection, the need to mobilize and to use all the potential and strength of the Muslim forces in confronting the Zionist enemy was emphasized.

Following the meeting, Mr Besharati answered correspondents' questions and said: The objective behind the current efforts is to ensure lasting security for the people of Lebanon.

If the arrival of the Syrian military forces in Beirut's southern suburb meets this demand, then we will not oppose it. However, if this is to take place, preliminary steps are definitely necessary.

In conclusion, the deputy foreign minister said: The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian officials are sincerely cooperating in order to return calm to Beirut's southern suburb.

Meanwhile, at the same time that clashes were taking place along the Al-Shiyah and Al-Ghubayrah combat lines, situated in the extreme northeast of the southern suburb, the situation in the other parts of this area, which has come under the control of Hizballah forces, is gradually returning to normal.

A large number of people who had left the southern suburb during the clashes are now gradually returning to their homes.

While preparing a report on the streets of Beirut's southern suburb yesterday, our correspondents observed that some of the shops in this area have reopened and that activity on the streets is gradually returning to normal.

It also was observed that Hizballah has set up several control posts in important parts of the southern suburb in order to prevent any incident that could upset security.

Meanwhile, during interviews with our correspondents, the people and armed men called for an immediate halt to the conflict and for the reestablishment of calm and security in the southern suburb.

They thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its humanitarian efforts to prevent bloodshed and civil war among the Muslims, and pointed out that before needing foreign forces, the residents of Beirut's southern suburb need security to be established in this region.

Besharati, Al-Husayni Discuss Suburb Security

NC1905184288 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Following his meeting with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni today, Iranian envoy 'Ali Mohammad Besharati stated that the deployment of Syrian troops in the suburb is a matter that needs further discussion.

He added that if such an entry will ensure security, we would not be against this security.

Speaker al-Husayni's information office has issued the following statement in connection with Besharati's visit: The meeting provided a good opportunity to review the ordeal in Beirut's southern suburb, the fighting between brothers, and the ongoing endeavors to bring this fighting to an end.

Speaker al-Husayni emphasized the unceasing desire to maintain the strongest and best relations between Lebanon and the Islamic Republic of Iran. He also underlined the need to expand the West Beirut security plan in order to cover the southern suburb, with the support and help of Syria, which has played a leading role in ending the fighting among brothers and sons of the same homeland in more than one area in Lebanon.

Furthermore, it has been proven throughout the long years of the Lebanese crisis that when security is entrusted to joint partisan forces, the only results are disasters, tragedies, and more pain, and the usefulness of security committees of various kinds is thus negated.

It has been learned that Besharati informed Al-Husayni of the outcome of his talks with Minister Birri and Brigadier General Gahzi Kan'an. During the meeting, Besharati expressed optimism over the issues of an end to the fighting and the deployment of Syrian troops in the suburb.

Amal-Hizballah Clashes Continue 19-20 May

NC1905155188 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The situation in the southern suburb again became tense this afternoon. Security sources said that Amal-Hizballah artillery clashes took place at 1500 today on the Al-Shiyah and Al-Ghubayrah lines. Some shells fell on the Shatila traffic circle and adjacent areas.

Amal Movement sources reported that the areas of Al-Shiyah, the airport road, Ard Jallul, Bi'r Hasan, and Rawdat al-Shahidayn were shelled from Hizballah positions in Hayy Madi and Bi'r al-'Abd.

Security sources said that artillery emplacements of the Lebanese Forces in Jisr al-Basha and Al-Bawshariyah also joined in the shelling, which took place while talks to restore calm in the suburb through political means were continuing between the Syrian and Iranian sides.

120-mm Mortars Used

NC1905213188 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2115 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The fighting between Hizballah and Amal gunmen is continuing. Machineguns, rockets, and 120-mm mortars are being used in the clashes.

Amal Statement on Fighting

NC1905185388 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The Amal Movement's Political Bureau maintains that what happened in the southern suburb was not a military victory for anyone. The bureau charged all partitionist forces with joining Hizballah in the fighting.

In a statement issued after a meeting held under Minister Nabih Birri, the Amal Movement leader, the Political Bureau said that the plot to create strife in the southern suburb is a link in the chain of major plots designed to partition Lebanon and distort the will of its people.

Noting the continuing assassinations and raids on houses in the suburb, the Bureau said that the 100,000 families with homes in the suburb absolutely refuse to return to it under the present conditions and strongly demand that the Syrian Arab forces enter the suburb in order to impose security and complete the West Beirut security plan.

The Amal Movement's Political Bureau affirmed that the suburb's security plan constitutes the only solution to the present situation.

5 Killed, 35 Wounded 19 May

NC2005065588 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 20 May 88

[Excerpt] The fighting between Amal and Hizballah continued in Al-Shiyah and Al-Ghubayrah until midnight last night. The clashes erupted again at 0500 today. Hizballah sources disclosed that Al-Ghubayrah was subjected to violent mortar fire originating from Amal positions.

The sources added that Bi'r al-'Abd and Hayy Madi also came under shell fire from Amal positions in Al-Tayyunah last night. Five people were killed and 35 others were wounded in yesterday's clashes.

For the first time, the shelling involved areas in which Syrian troops have deployed along the Airport Road, Shatila, Qasqas, and Ard Jallul. [passage omitted]

Fighting Intensifies 20 May

NC2005054988 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 20 May 88

[Excerpts] The issue of Syrian troop deployment in the southern suburb continues to be a priority amid continuing fighting between the warring factions, which intensified at 0500 today.

The ongoing consultations center on working out a formula that would guarantee a symbolic Syrian deployment in a number of areas in the suburb and ensure Syrian guarantees to Hizballah. [passage omitted]

Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, chief of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, has affirmed that the Syrian entry into the suburb is unavoidable. Kan'an, who has left for Damascus and is due to return within the next few hours, has reiterated Syria's determination to intervene in the suburb but noted that the time of intervention has not yet been set.

Kan'an declined to specify the size of the force which will take part in the operation, noting that this is a military secret. [passage omitted]

At the end of a meeting with Chamber Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, Iranian envoy 'Ali Mohammad Besharati has said that the Syrian forces' entry into the suburb is subject to discussion.

He pointed out that the Iranians do not object to such entry if it ensures security. He expressed his rejection of any Iranian force's participation in a mission within the suburb. Besharati told AL-ANWAR newspaper that Iran does not reject the Syrian entry if there is no other solution.

More on 20 May Fighting

NC2005142688 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Fighting on the Al-Shiyah-Al-Ghubayrah combat line in Beirut's southern suburb intensified this afternoon. The two areas came under shellfire, which extended to other neighborhoods.

We have been informed that policeman Ahmad Barud was wounded in the shelling. He was taken to the hospital for treatment.

Fadlallah on Shi'ite Fighting, Hizballah Ideology

JN1305192688 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1750 GMT 13 May 88

[Telephone interview with Hizballah spiritual leader Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah by Radio Monte Carlo News Director Antoine Nawfal carried in the weekly "It Happened Tomorrow" program; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Nawfal] Sir, you are considered the spiritual guide of Hizballah, and you have influence in this party. Is this influence only spiritual, or is it also political?

[Fadlallah] I do not have any spiritual or political organizational capacity in Hizballah or in any other political axis. However, I act as a guide to the Muslims in Lebanon or elsewhere in accordance with the Islamic situation in the circle I operate in.

At the same time, I am not neutral regarding the Islamic situation. However, I sponser the state of Islam and take care of it. I also have some influence on it. At any rate, in light of complications in the present situation, I do not have ultimate influence on the political level.

[Nawfal] Hizballah has achieved a great victory over the Amal Movement in the southern suburb, needless to say after a bloody conflict among the sons of the one sect, and after numerous losses.

In your opinion, what are the true reasons behind this conflict between the sons of the one sect in the southern suburb?

[Fadlallah] To start with, I do not like to use the word victory in such a tragic situation because we consider any internecine fighting in the arena that is not sincerely confronting Israel a loss to all sides.

However, if we want to discuss the reasons, then we will find that some of them stem from the backward mentality regarding the direction of the political conflict in the Lebanese arena, which cannot tolerate a different opinion, but seeks to express its rejection of the opposite opinion by force.

It acts through a narrow situation that is experienced by the fighters and some leaders, which seek to make out of the small differences on some security sides a prelude to a big war as happened in the southern suburb and in the war in southern Lebanon before this.

This is in addition to the emotional mentality of some leaders that do not study actual facts and in the local, regional, and international circles that benefit from any haphazard emotional behavior to pave the way for armed conflicts.

Another point in this regard is that the political base is not governed by balanced rules between the Amal Movement and Hizballah that exist in the same arena. We have always called for the existence of rules regarding the political and security relations between them in a manner enabling each side to recognize the other within these rules.

However, it seems that the dictatorship of some sides prevents them from creating a balanced situation. We believe that this bitter and hard experience might lead to setting a plan for balanced relations that would prevent the renewal of such incidents.

[Nawfal] In a statement you said balanced relationships should be established between Hizballah and the Amal Movement. Then you said there should be a reconsideration of the situation in southern Lebanon.

Do you not think that the events in the southern suburb were a direct reaction to what happened in southern Lebanon, when Hizballah suffered a setback there?

[Fadlallah] According to information I have received, Hizballah did not aim to enter a battle, neither on the basis of a reaction or an action. But, there were mobile committees which met to study the new relations between Hizballah and the Amal Movement on the nature of the resistance in the south and the security in the south.

These issues were distant from any feeling of the existence of a problem in the suburb. These committees were destined to succeed in their work except for the security problem, which certain leaderships worked to direct toward a comprehensive battle, as happened in the south.

[Nawfal] The battles that occurred in the southern suburb—were the causes of this battle completely internal among the sons of the same sect? Or was there any external interference by anyone?

[Fadlallah] We cannot clearly refer these incidents to external interference in the sedition. But we know that there is a political depth, which moves amid the political and security situation and which directly and indirectly prepares the ground and works to benefit from the results.

We cannot separate any security incident in Lebanon from the political framework in the regional and international circles, and to varying degrees. We also cannot provide definite material data on this.

But we feel it through the broad outlook on the horizon, and through the general data available in Lebanon.

[Nawfal] There are certain reports which say, and I do not know how true these are, that the Iranian side has helped Hizabllah, and that even certain Palestinian sides have helped Hizballah, while the 6th Brigade, and probably Syria, have helped the Amal Movement. What do you think of this?

[Fadlallah] The Iranians, as revolutionary guards, have had no presence in the suburb from the beginning of the sedition to now. I do not know of any Palestinian help to Hizballah in this regard because the suburb is surrounded on all sides. If there was clear Palestinian help, the others would have clearly discovered it.

[Nawfal] Do you now consider the suburb surrounded? Or has Hizballah achieved victory because it seized a number of Amal's positions?

[Fadlallah] Naturally, there has been an expansion in positions. But when I talk about a siege, I talk about the sides that live on the outskirts of the suburb. I have information in this regard and have access to it. But there is no data on this.

[Nawfal] After the bloody incidents in the south and the suburb, do you think reconciliation between the Amal Movement and Hizballah is possible?

[Fadlallah] I think this difficult experience represents a shock to both sides. It prepares for general pressure through a broad popular base and makes all religious and political functionaries face their responsibilities.

At the same time, we think that the personal intervention by President Hafiz al-Asad in forming a four-sided committee after his conversations with President Khamene'i will place the issue on a firm basis as far as a cease-fire dialogue between the two sides to reach a balanced base are concerned.

We think that the weight of this move may create a balanced situation, especially since the two sides are compatible with Syria in light of Al-Asad's strategy on the fundamental issues, which are to confront Israel, U.S. colonialism, and internal injustice. This makes us think that the chances are better, and they could be heading in the right direction.

[Nawfal] You said in a statement carried by news agencies that the Syrian troops' entry into Beirut's southern suburb will not resolve the problem at all. However, if the clashes erupt again and the bloody conflict continues unabated, in your opinion, what will the solution be?

[Fadlallah] I believe that the issue of the Syrians' entry into the southern suburb or into any other place depends on Syria's strategy; namely, the political and security considerations that are precisely calculated by Syria, irrespective of the local Lebanese givens or their security incidents.

Therefore, the issue pertains to Syria's strategy. Based on my accurate information regarding what is going in the area, I believe that ending the sedition and war in the southern suburb does not need a direct Syrian force, though we have no problems with the entry of a force into the suburb.

It would be sufficient to see the weight of Syria's influence exerted on some parties, thereby bringing about an end to the tension. Then, there will not be any security problem, in my opinion.

We have seen the effect of this. When President Hafiz al-Asad formed the guadripartite committee, the security situation improved in the absence of any disengagement force there.

[Nawfal] Now the situation in Beirut's southern suburb is being equated with that in southern Lebanon. I do not know the extent of the veracity of the reports being carried about this equation.

This equation is interpreted by saying that any possible solution must entail the return of Hizballah's influence to southern Lebanon.

[Fadlallah] When we speak about balanced relations, it is natural to see these relations permeate the entire area. When we talk about a solution to this problem, it is natural to view any situation in which there is a conquerer and a conquered party, whether this situation prevails in southern Lebanon or Beirut's southern suburb, as one that creates complications and problems.

Hence, I believe that integration in the southern suburb, southern Lebanon, and the Al-Biqa', based on a studied formula on the political and security issues, is the only thing that can preserve the land and achieve the political objectives of all parties.

I believe that the absence of a balanced political base might result in the creation of many complications, even on the level of the fateful issues and on the level of many regional and perhaps international issues related to Lebanon.

[Nawfal] You spoke about the political base. Are we to understand that you meant that there is to be a politically and perhaps religiously unified base for the Shi'ite sect to face issues? Is the Lebanese presidency one of these issues?

[Fadlallah] It is natural to see that any popular movement in Lebanon, whether it is a sect or a political axis, cannot maintain neutrality over the issue of the presidency.

The presidency does not represent in itself a big thing. However, the background and connections evolving within it represent things that affect the life of all citizens.

Hence, it is natural to see a basic stand adopted toward this issue, whether this pertains to people, to the framework, or to the issue of the direct consequences which vanish before and after decisively settling the issue, but which are nevertheless the results of the way the issue is handled.

[Nawfal] How do you evaluate your relations with Iran?

[Fadlallah] We agree with Iran because it represents the political and spiritual Islamic base. We completely adhere to Iran's line in the same way that any group that has a definite ideological and political line and trend adheres to the line of any state.

Accordingly, I would like to point out that we are not agents of Iran, as the media try to depict us. We do not owe allegiance to Iran in the full sense of the word.

We represent an Islamic political line, which is part of the Islamic line in the world. There is also a difference. Our line is the same as the Marxist line in the world in terms of ties with the USSR, the pan-Arab line in terms of relations with Egypt during Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir days, the line of the same ideology with mobile positions in more than one direction and which has a solid base in this respect.

We are part of the world Islamic movement, whose solid base is represented by Iran. We have the freedom to have our own views on special Lebanese affairs when speaking to Iranian brothers and others.

We have our own views even in international issues, methods of political work, and the lines of political thought in this regard.

The issue should not be understood within the narrow framework in which the various political ideologies place it. It should be within the larger framework, which moves within the international concept which considers Islam a new formula, with all the comprehensive political, economic, and social ideology that Islam represents.

[Nawfal] You say, sir, that you are part of the Islamic movement. Iran calls for Islamic revolutions and Islamic republics. It calls for Islamic republics everywhere.

In Lebanon, for example, when the issue of the Islamic republic is proposed—and it has been proposed many times—you talk on this subject. Today, how do you evaluate your position if Iran calls for establishing an Islamic republic in Lebanon?

[Fadlallah] There is a misunderstanding concerning the issue of proposing an Islamic republic in Lebanon. In fact, this proposition is not a utopian one and part of sacred ideas or an imaginary political atmosphere.

The issue is that Islam is noted in the Lebanese political situation as a sectarian entity and within the tribal mentality within which everybody is working in accordance with their interests and leanings and without ideological considerations. The Islamic movement in Lebanon says that Islam is a comprehensive ideological and political entity.

While it is a spiritual movement calling for prayer and worship, it is also a mundane thing. Shari'a is a comprehensive worldly system based on Islamic thought, which defines all human connectins on the individual and social levels.

Naturally, there must be a theory of government within this framework. Therefore, when we propose the Islamic republic, we do not propose it on the basis of the Lebanese sectarian formula, calling for the rule of one sect at the expense of another.

What we want is to present Islam for everybody as a solution for the problem of the Muslim, Chrisitian, and non-Christian, exactly as in the case of Marxist theory.

What do the Marxists want in Lebanon? They want to establish a Marxist Lebanese republic. What do the pan-Arabists want in Lebanon? They want to establish a pan-Arab republic as part of Arab unity.

What do the socialists want in Lebanon? They want to transform Lebanon into a socialist republic. We would like to say that we are moving within this ideological framework.

Our method in this regard is to present the idea and move it politically and ideologically. If the people accept it, then naturally it will reach its natural end. If they do not accept it, it will remain as a political movement in addition to the other political movements in the political arena.

Naturally, whoever preaches a comprehensive ideology should speak about a government to sponsor this ideology. However, the question is: Do we want to impose our opinions by terrorism, as they claim?

Do we want to do this within the framework of extremism which says that either we have everything or nothing at all? This we deny and denounce.

While believing that Islam represents a solution for the problems of the Muslims and non-Muslims, we also consider the political phases even though this phase might be very far and the final results may not be forthcoming.

We work to entrench the Muslim-Christian coexistence in Lebanon. We are working to establish a balanced Muslim-Christian dialogue. We work to open the door to all the political groups to discuss political issues with them, whether it is on the level of facing Israel, confronting the imperialist plots, or fateful developments in Lebanon.

We are not isolated from the arena but as Islamists, we regard ourselves as a basic part of this arena. We move according to civilized ideological and political methods. And when we activate the security issue, we do that in the same way as others do, taking into consideration ways to defend ourselves.

We do not want the people to consider the motto of the Islamic republic in Lebanon as one within a confused circle. We want to say that we are presenting an idea and we tell the people:

Understand this ideology, discuss it, criticize it, or accept it. We are also prepared to discuss other ideologies, criticize them, accept or refuse them. If Lebanon is an arena of freedom, we have the right to have our freedom in promoting our ideology as others have.

Otherwise, what is the meaning of saying that you are free, that you give freedom to others but tell Islamists that they have no freedom in Lebanon.

We denounce sectarianism. Indeed, we are against sectarianism. We are an Islamic movement which thinks freely, moves on realistic lines, and aimes at solving the problems of man. We believe in man's freedom and in dealing with all of his interests and issues.

[Nawfal] I understand that you want to convince others of your ideas and ideology. Suppose you have a vote in the House of Deputies, would you support the election of a Christian president in Lebanon?

[Fadlallah] We may not find the political situation conducive to voting for a Christian president. Even if there were a Muslim candidate, we might not vote for him. We want to say that it is meaningless to impose a Christian president, or a Maronite president.

We do not believe in the rationalism of this thinking. However, this has been the norm and convention as a result of political fears and counterfears. This does not mean that we accept any and every Muslim president.

In this political phase, we will study the personality of any president in order to know the extent of his response to the popular trends and the fateful issues in order to define our attitude toward him.

[Nawfal] Finally, and after answering various questions, especially about your ties with Tehran, I should ask the following question: What are your relations with Syria and how do you evaluate them, especially since it has been said that Tehran supports Hizballah and Syria the Amal Movement?

[Fadllallah] As Islamists, we view our relations with states and parties through our strategy. As Islamists, we regard our stand toward Zionism as a decisive one, meaning that we do not recognize the Israeli presence on any part of Palestinian territory.

Therefore, we are sensitive to any decision or stand that grants the Israelis legitimacy. Therefore, we work on being in all positions of confrontation with Israel both from the short-term and strategic viewpoints.

We also confront world arrogance, led by the United States, which created Israel for us in the region in order to prevent the region from progressing, either politically or economically.

The United States is working to make Israel the policeman of the region and transform our countries into consumer states that will not be self-sufficient unless they become lackeys for the U.S. economy.

At the same time, we work for creating a Lebanese situation characterized by comprehensive justice for all citizens. In light of all this, we are in agreement with the Syrian Arab Republic on these three lines, which Syria defines as its policy concerning Israel and Palestine, concerning its international policy toward the United States, and concerning Syria's policy toward Lebanon and the odd situation which was developed by the Lebanese regime's work methods.

Amal Movement Announces Dismissals, Expulsions

NC1905173188 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Amal Movement leader Minister Nabih Birri today chaired a meeting of the Amal Movement's organizational Bureau, which discussed matters related to the organization of the movement.

This afternoon he chaired the weekly meeting of the movement's Political Bureau, at which the latest developments in the situation in the southern suburb were reviewed. The Organizational Bureau later issued the following statement:

The Organizational Bureau has made the following decisions, which the Amal Movement's Political Bureau has approved:

'Aql Hamiyah, Rabi' Amhaz, 'Ali Mar'i, and Husayn Qasim, alias Abu Hadid, are relieved of their responsibilities in the Amal Movement and expelled from the movement.

The resignation of Hasan Sharaf from his military responsibility for the Beirut region is accepted. His resignation was submitted upon request.

The committee of the fourth region, Al-Karamah, is dissolved, and Mustafa, the security official for the region, is asked to take charge of the region temporarily.

'Ali 'Akkush is asked to take charge of the third region, Burj al-Barajinah, and to submit the necessary proposals for its reorganization.

Ihsan Junblatt is relieved of his military responsibility in the fifth area of the Beirut region, Al-Awza'i, and the security official for the area is asked to assume military responsibilities, in addition to his security duties, until another official is appointed.

Qabalan Urges Syria To Send Troops into Suburb

NC1905163888 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] In a message to the inhabitants of the southern suburb today, Grand Ja'farite Mufti Shaykh 'Abd al-Amir Qabalan urged the Syrian command to dispatch its troops to the suburb as this move will ensure an end to the farce of committees, observers, and cease-fire agreements.

He insisted that the suburb's security must be linked to that of West Beirut, and said that the feeble considerations and pretexts being raised in connection with the decision to establish security in the suburb should be ignored.

Mufti Qabalan rejected any role by any militia or party because no security imposed by a militia or party can meet the people's aspirations for peace and stability.

Draft Solution Presented to Palestinian Fighters

NC1505202688 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 GMT 15 May 88

[Text] Representatives of the nationalist and progressive parties and forces and of Palestinian groups held a meeting at the house of Akram Shuhayyib this evening. The discussions during the meeting dealt with the situation in the camps, especially the Burj al-Barajinah Camp.

Palestinian sources have stated that a Palestinian delegation entered the Burj al-Barajinah Camp this evening, taking with it a draft solution to the recent clashes that took place there.

The draft solution is based on returning to the Fatah—the Uprising the positions it held in the camp prior to the recent fighting and releasing to it the detainees held by the Fatah Central Committee.

This would take place in return for the withdrawal of Uprising fighters from around the camp and an end to their siege of the camp.

The delegation is expected to return tomorrow morning to brief the nationalist parties and the Palestinian groups on the results of its mission.

Cease-Fire Reached

NC2005142788 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] According to the latest security reports, a cease-fire agreement has been reached in Burj al-Barajinah Camp. The cease-fire went into effect at 1530 today, in the wake of violent clashes which broke out in the camp at 1440.

Various types of weapons were used in the fighting, and the sound of artillery shelling was heard in various parts of Beirut.

According to a security report, Palestinian artillery in the mountain region also bombarded positions inside Burj al-Barajinah Camp. In addition, the camp came under shellfire from the Shatila and Mar Ilyas areas.

Fighting Resumes 20 May

NC2005131188 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Clashes involving the use of various types of weapons broke out among the various Palestinian groups inside Burj al-Barajinah Camp at 1440 today. The sound of artillery shelling inside the camp is heard from time to time.

Israeli Aircraft in Mock Raids; Gunboats Off South

NC1905201188 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 19 May 88

[Text] Israeli military aircraft are flying over the South and conducting mock air raids over Sidon and nearby camps, firing flares. At the same time, Israeli gunboats are cruising off Sidon and the southern coast.

Rockets Hit Israeli Zefat Settlement 20 May

NC2005122088 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] A group of resistance fighters inside the occupation border strip fired four Grad rockets at the Zefat settlement in the occupied territory at dawn today, scoring direct hits.

Talas: 'No Disagreements Whatsoever' With Iran
LD1905110188 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Talas yesterday said: Syria and Iran are strategic allies and have no disagreements whatsoever with each other.

Concerning the clashes in the southern suburbs or Beirut between the forces of Nabih Birri and Hizballah, he said: This problem is currently being followed up through diplomatic channels and we hope it will be solved in this way.

Damascus Receives Three Soviet Submarines
JN1905155888 Manama WAKH in English 1548 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, May 19 (GNA)—Syria received recently three advanced submarines from the Soviet Union, press reports said here today.

Quoting Western military sources UAE daily 'AL-ITTIHAD' said Syria's acquisition of these advanced submarines was an important step in enhancing the combat capability of its naval forces.

The sources said the submarines were provided with 18 anti-ship and anti-submarine torpedos and designed to accommodate a crew of 90 members.

Damascus Radio on U.S. 'Neocolonialism' in Egypt
JN2005074288 Damascus Voice of Arab Egypt in Arabic 1845 GMT 9 May 88

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Brothers in Egypt and the Arab homeland: These days, colonialism enters this or that country without saber rattling or violence. It enters through agreements, memoranda of military understanding, secret agreements, and unpublished appendices.

Colonialists are handed the political, economic, and military keys, so that they are established without anybody saying that there is colonialism that has to be disposed of.

This is what has happened to the Egyptian regime which, as a natural result of its subservience, has provided the Americans and Zionists with Egyptian ports, airports, and lands in return for some U.S. weapons and hardware.

Naturally, brothers, the Americans will not give the regime the same weapons they give to Israel or other allies and partners. In other words, the U.S. weapons that Abu Ghazalah is so proud of are second-class weapons, and their use will either be in the service of U.S. interests or subject to U.S. approval.

Therefore, the memo of military understanding with the Americans is neocolonialism. It is colonialism by all standards unless there are some who believe that surrendering to the foreigner is not colonialism.

It is clear that after they have withdrawn the regime from any possible confrontation with the Zionist enemy, the Americans want the regime to act as a policeman in the region and to receive its orders from the White House or the Pentagon and to implement them. Taken collectively, these orders will be to suppress all the voices raised to stop U.S. hegemony over the region.

What is more dangerous is that despite its denial, the regime will become a source of information on fraternal Arab states, whether it likes it or not. The United States will give the Zionists free access to this information in order to launch a new aggressive war and to pursue and assassinate the strugglers and leaders of liberation movements.

U.S. planes, which move freely in Egyptian airspace, will have a special missions. Probably the most important of these missions will be to protect the so-called Israeli security zone and to give facilities to the Zionist entity to encroach on the sovereignty of the Arab states.

All of this will take place under the cover of strategic balance between the allies. Under this cover and banner, Israel will get modern weapons. So, what may seem to the regime to be a favorable treatment on the part of the United States is really a deception.

Brothers, a new constraint has been added to the existing constraints against the regime, beginning with economic, cultural, and political subservience and ending with military subservience and control over everything in Egypt. Despite this, the regime's propaganda, in their usual political hypocrisy, still talks about the independent Egyptian decisionmaking.

Afghanistan

Army Evacuates Posts Ahead of Rebel Offensive

BK2005112588 Hong Kong AFP in English
1105 GMT 20 May 88

[By Anil Penna]

[Text] Kabul, May 20 (AFP)—The Afghan Army has withdrawn from military posts at some points along the border with Pakistan in a strategic retreat ahead of an expected rebel offensive, Asian diplomatic sources said here.

The Army has so far vacated about 15 posts within six kilometres (3.6 miles) of the frontier, and redeployed in key garrisons such as Jalalabad and Qandahar, the well-informed sources said.

It is, however, well-entrenched in Khowst—a major Soviet-Afghan garrison town that has been under almost constant siege by the resistance since the start of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan eight-and-a-half years ago.

Some military analysts say the mujahidin may launch an offensive to take Khowst, which fell out of rebel control after fierce fighting late last year.

The town is well-defended by the Kabul army without the support of Soviet troops, which began Sunday a nine-month phased pullout from Afghanistan under the April 14 Geneva accords.

Moslem rebels, who reject the accords and are fighting to overthrow the Soviet-backed government of President Najibullah, could be planning to take Khowst ahead of an attempt to overrun Qandahar, Afghanistan's second most important city, the sources said.

The Afghan Army has also started trying to evacuate villages within six kilometres (3.6 miles) of the Pakistan border as part of the strategy to counter a possible offensive, said the sources, who declined to be identified.

A zone free of government troops and civilians would give the Kabul air force the freedom to bomb and strafe guerrilla caravans and arms consignments arriving from Pakistan.

According to the Asian sources, the mujahidin will find it difficult to gain control of major cities.

To launch an offensive to take Qandahar or Jalalabad—which was vacated by Soviet troops at the start of Sunday's withdrawal—the rebels would have to convert themselves from a guerrilla force into an organised army with regular supply lines and access to arms dumps, they said.

The Afghan strategy would be aimed at closing supply lines, they added.

However, the sources admitted that several towns surrounding Qandahar have fallen to the rebels and the possible loss of the southern city would be a severe blow to the Kabul government.

They said rebels could be planning to set up a parallel government in Qandahar.

Western sources said security in Qandahar was in "extremely bad shape," and it would be difficult for the Kabul government to maintain its control there.

They added that a 26-kilometre (16-mile) road from Qandahar to the airport was under pressure from rebel attacks.

(In Islamabad, resistance sources said Friday the mujahidin had captured the garrison of Robat Tazi in the southeastern Zabol Province and blocked the Qandahar-Kabul highway passing through the area.

(Mujahidin from several groups took the garrison in a joint operation May 15, the day Soviet troops began their withdrawal, killing 85 Afghan troops, capturing another 415 and seizing arms and ammunition, the sources said.

(They did not disclose rebel casualties. Soviet troops had left the area two months earlier, they said.)

Rafi' Lauds Departing Soviet Soldiers in Termez

LD1905191588 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Colonel Yuriy Starov, commander of a Soviet motorized infantry unit—the first unit to return to the USSR from Afghanistan—said yesterday that the unit had proudly fulfilled its internationalist duty.

The commander was speaking at a gathering held to welcome the unit at Termez. He added: The soldiers of the unit helped the people of Afghanistan to protect the gains of the April Revolution during the past 9 years.

Our soldiers and officers did what they could in the interest of peace on Afghan territory. He said: Our comrades did not sacrifice their lives in vain. Afghanistan will remain free and independent.

Lieutenant General Mohammad Rafi', member of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo and Afghan defense minister, also spoke at the gathering and said:

The Soviet Union, as an internationalist nation, helped Afghanistan when its freedom, independence, and territorial integrity were in serious danger. Today, we can see the results of this selfless assistance: Children go to schools, peasants are busy cultivating, and people work in the factories.

The defense minister said: You have helped us to form a people's army with combat readiness, which is able to independently carry out any duty to protect the homeland.

He added: Words of thanks are echoing all over Afghanistan for the internationalist soldiers and all the Soviet people. The soldiers are leaving our country, but our friendship with the Soviet Union will remain and will continue to develop and expand.

Lt Gen Mohammad Rafi' said: We thank you for what you have done for the people of Afghanistan. The memory of your bravery and self-sacrifice will remain in the minds of Afghanistan's appreciative people.

We pay respect to the memory of those who sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan.

India

Reportage on Situation at Golden Temple Complex

Punjab Police Chief Comments

BK1905155888 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] In Amritsar, efforts are on to restore the sanctity of the Golden Temple complex at the earliest. Talking to newsmen in Amritsar today, the director general of Punjab Police, Mr K.P.S. Gill, said that a team of experts with the help of local citizens and members of SGPC is searching the entire complex for possible arms and ammunition.

He said out of the 46 terrorists who surrendered yesterday, cases against 44 have been registered under the Terrorist Disruptive Activities Act. The other two have been released.

Mr Gill said during the search operation a large sum of money beside a number of sophisticated arms and ammunition were recovered. Thirty-nine bodies were removed. Mr Gill said vehicles belonging to SGPC were used for carrying arms and ammunition into the temple complex.

Temple Cleanup Continues

BK2005050588 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Fifteen people were gunned down and eight injured in Punjab last night. Six of them were killed and two injured in Jullundur District in three separate incidents.

Four were shot dead and five wounded in Bhatinda District. They were standing at a bus stop in Bhuchuwamandi and were killed when terrorists opened indiscriminate fire.

Five laborers were shot dead in Amritsar District at village Chinakaram Singh. One terrorist was shot dead by the security forces at Nawashahar in Jullundur District. Two terrorists were arrested with the help of the public in Kapurthala District.

An official spokesman said in Amritsar this morning the sanctity of the Golden Temple will be restored soon. He told our correspondent that the process of cleaning the temple is almost complete and steps are being taken for the resumption of traditional rituals. He sought the cooperation of the SGPC and other social organizations and citizens for the purpose.

The director general of the Punjab Police, Mr K.P.S. Gill, has said there has been an erosion in the cadres of various extremist groups in the state following the surrender of terrorists at the Golden Temple complex.

Briefing newsmen in Amritsar last evening, Mr Gill said the so-called Khalistan Commando Force and the Khalistan Liberation Force have received a major setback by the surrender of their group leaders.

He said the preliminary interrogation of the terrorists has revealed that there was a substantial upgradation in the weapons supplied by Pakistan, both in terms of number and sophistication.

Mr Gill also said the information provided by the surrendered terrorists will considerably help the security forces in their antiterrorist operations. Police parties have already been sent to several places to apprehend their accomplices and recover weapons.

Ministers Visit Temple

BK2005081288 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 20 May 88

[Excerpt] The union home minister, Mr Buta Singh, and the minister of state for home, Mr P. Chidambaram, visited the Golden Temple complex this morning to see the damage caused to the holy shrine by the terrorists.

This information was given by the director general of the Punjab Police, Mr K.P.S. Gill, to newsmen in Amritsar.

Meanwhile, an inventory of arms, ammunition, and other explosives recovered from the complex is being prepared. The process of cleaning the temple is in progress and steps are being taken for resuming the traditional rituals. [passage omitted]

Paper Claims Government Behind Punjab Incidents
BK1905102588 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 10 May 88 p 8

[Editorial: "Speak Clearly"]

[Text] For several months many, specially Sikhs, have come to believe that at least some of the terrorist killings in Punjab have been caused, directly or indirectly, by various acts of omission and commission on the part of the Central Government.

This suspicion was strengthened last month when THE INDIAN POST and THE OBSERVER of London carried a report describing how last November some crates addressed to a non-existent official in the Department of Telecommunications had been found to contain ammunition and a rocket launcher.

The crates had arrived on the Indian Airlines flight from Kabul, and even as the police were about to begin an official inspection of the contents, a man claiming to be from the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) came and took away the crates saying that they were government property.

The report was not denied by the Government, which opted for silence. A few days later, the issue came up for discussion in the Rajya Sabha, where several members, including General J. S. Aurora and Mr L. K. Advani, demanded an explanation from the Government. The members were apprehensive that the contents of the RAW consignment may have been meant for Punjab.

Then, on May 4, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr. P. Chidambaram, made a statement in Parliament. He described the insinuation contained in the original report, that RAW might be up to evil in Punjab, as "preposterous and wrong."

But he did not deny that the crates had, in fact, arrived and that they had contained ammunition and as reported, at least one rocket launcher. On the other hand, he appeared to justify the whole business by saying that the intelligence agencies did obtain equipment from time to time for research and analysis in order to keep abreast with developments in the world.

This leaves the question of whether RAW is planting arms and ammunition in Punjab unanswered. Several questions need explaining. Were the arms meant for arming one faction among the militants so that it may deal with the others?

Were they meant for some groups in Bangladesh? President Ershad has already alleged that India is arming some groups hostile to him. Since the crates were sent by someone in Kabul, the contents were probably of Russian make.

If so, Mr Chidambaram's explanation, that intelligence agencies import weapons to keep abreast of development, rings very hollow. For, are we not importing weapons from the Russians by the shipload through perfectly straightforward and legal means?

Why did RAW have to go to such lengths when all it had to do was to request the Army HQ? There is also the curious fact that so far rocket launchers seem to have been used very precisely to avoid people.

And then there are the coincidences. The first rocket launchers were said to have been used against the CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] post on March 21, which just happened to be the day before the 59th amendment was to be, and eventually was passed.

And the 59th amendment having been passed, we stopped hearing about rocket launchers, Stinger missiles, etc. Until the Government gives a more convincing explanation of coincidences such as these, and of such obvious oddities as the fact that while it claims to have the Golden Temple complex under the strictest surveillence, arms—in larger and larger numbers, and more and more lethal—continue to find their way to the inmates, the charges, now more and more frequent, about the intent and the role of the Government, will congeal into suspicion.

After all, it isn't just what is happening in Punjab that fans such charges. Many recall how the killings escalated suddenly on the eve of the Tripura poll, and, once the Congress (I) had won, subsided just as suddenly.

Security Forces Kill Gurkha 'Activist'
BK1905161288 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] A GNLF [Gurkha National Liberation Front] militant was killed and five state armed police constables were seriously injured in a heavy exchange of fire between the GNLF and police personnel in Kalimpong this afternoon.

The Darjeeling District magistrate told our Kurseong correspondent that a group of GNLF militants opened indiscriminate fire on some jawans [soldiers] escorting a postal mail van.

The security men returned the fire in which one GNLF activist was killed. Eight bombs were exploded in different parts of Darjeeling town last night. There are no reports of any casualties.

The chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, has called for taking firm steps to check the violence unleashed by the GNLF in the Darjeeling hills. Mr Basu was presiding over a cabinet meeting in Calcutta today.

The meeting reviewed the latest situation in the Darjeeling hill area. It expressed serious concern over the incidents of violence there.

Indefinite Curfew Imposed on Maharashtra Town

BK1905150488 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] In Maharashtra, six persons were killed in stabbing incidents in Paithan Town, about 50 kilometers from Aurangabad today. Indefinite curfew has been imposed on the town.

According to police sources, a number of cases of arson and stabbing were reported. Meanwhile, the situation in Aurangabad is said to be under control. Curfew relaxation for 2 hours this morning passed off peacefully.

Shoot-on-Sight Orders Issued

BK2005032388 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] In Maharashtra, an indefinite curfew has been imposed and shoot-at-sight orders issued at Paithan in Aurangabad District following violence in which seven persons were stabbed to death yesterday.

According to the district authorities, the situation in Paithan and Aurangabad city is under control. No untoward incident has been reported from both the places since last night. An indefinite curfew in Aurangabad city has been relaxed for 2 hours from 0700 this morning.

Oil Exploration Contract Signed With Vietnam

BK1905154888 Hanoi VNA in English 1512 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Hanoi VNA May 19—A production sharing contract on exploration and exploitation of petroleum in offshore southern Vietnam was signed here today between the Vietnam National Oil Company (Petro-Vietnam) and the Hydrocarbons India Limited (HIL) under the Oil and Natural Gas Commission of India.

Signatories were Truong Thien, president of the Petro-Vietnam and director general of the General Oil and Gas Department of Vietnam, and S.C.N. Jatar, chairman and managing director of the HIL.

Under the 25-year contract, in addition to investing exploration capital, HIL will also train Vietnamese technical personnel in India.

The first surveys are expected in April 1989 and the first exploratory well is to be drilled in the following year. A team of Indian technical officers is already in Vietnam to get the necessary data.

The signing of this contract is in implementation of an intergovernmental Indo-Vietnamese agreement on cooperation in economy, science and technology. A protocol was signed between the two countries in January 1987 by the two foreign ministers.

Iran

Majlis Speaker Delivers Friday Prayers Sermons

LD2005134088 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] We begin our newscast with a report on the remarks made by Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani at Tehran's Friday prayer sermons. According to a Central News Unit report, the Majlis speaker praised the self-sacrifices and selflessness of the fighters of Islam in the victorious "Beyt ol-Moqaddas-6" operations, referring in particular to the capture of the strategic Shaykh Muhammad and Asas Heights.

He said: According to military experts, the strategic position of these heights are such that whoever holds those heights also has the upper hand in that region.

The imam's representative on the Supreme Defense Council referred to the presence of the United States and other allies of the Iraqi regime in the region. He said they are present because the regime ruling over Iraq is tottering.

He said: The arrogant forces embark on ugly deeds in support of the puppet Iraqi regime, the chemical bombing of Halabjah, and the killing of innocent people by the Zionist Iraqi regime.

Another reason is the cooperation of the United States in helping Iraq attack ships at the Larak terminal. He added: According to the United States' won admission, its aggressor forces in the Persian Gulf jammed our aircraft and ships' radar at the time the Zionist Iraqi regime's aircraft attacked so that the Zionist Iraqi regime could target several ships at the Larak terminal.

What is interesting is that in this attack, the most damage was sustained by Western countries, notably the supporters of the Iraqi regime. In order to inflict damage on us, they are prepared to sacrifice their own interests, or to have their pilots and their ships' crews killed in the Persian Gulf.

Moreover, we see that Arab reactionaries in OPEC betray their own nations, believing that in this way the Islamic Republic of Iran will be deprived of its revenues. All these are signs of the despair of the enemies of Iran and the Islamic Revolution.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani continued his remarks by saying that he believes a very sensitive point has been reached. He said: We have been making sacrifices for our revolution for 10 years, and we have been fighting for Islam for 8 years.

The enemy now finds itself in serious danger, and the supporters of Iraq, who used to mask their faces, have now exposed them. The United States came to the region under the slogan of safeguarding the security of shipping in the Persian Gulf, and is now openly supporting the Iraqi regime.

It places unlimited facilities at its disposal. Our nation will never abandon the arena with these threats and intimidations after 8 years and will fully prepare itself to confront these plots.

The imam's representative on the Supreme Defence Council also stressed: The American people should know that a war with the Iranian nation would cost them dearly, and if this war were to start, they should expect to receive the many coffins of their youth.

Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Of course, we do not desire such a situation; it is the United States, the Zionist regime of Iraq, and the supporters of this aggressor regime who are involving us in this situation.

Therefore, the solution is clear: For security to prevail in the Persian Gulf, you should tell the Iraqi regime, your servant, that it should not hit our ships and facilities in the Persian Gulf. Your ships will not then receive divine shots.

The imam's representative on the Supreme Defence Council then emphasized: For as long as justice is withheld from the one nation that deserves justice, we will hold out until the last man.

The Majlis speaker also referred to the terrible events in Lebanon. He said: The young Muslim Palestinians and Lebanese, who should be waging jihad against the Israelis, the Phalangists, and the Saddamists, have unfortunetly turned their guns on each other instead of their true enemies. We call on the leaders of these militant youngsters to prevent further bloodshed.

He also referred to the elections for the third Majlis. He said: Our people went the polls to select their candidates under circumstances when Tehran and some other parts of the country were under intense enemy threats.

The holding of elections proves the strength and power of our society. He also thanked the employees and experts of the Ministry of Post, Telegraph, and Telephones for the services they rendered to the people of Iran.

He said: It is a matter of pride that we are moving toward acquiring an extensive national telecommunications network during a time of war.

After referring to the activities of the Open Islamic University and the efforts made by this educational establishment to attract those interested in higher education, the Majlis speaker remarked on the improper observance of the use of Islamic dress by some women.

He said: The United States does not hatch its plots only on the borders, but it also embarks on conspiracy and mischief inside the country: Improper observance of the use of Islamic dress is an example of this. Those who commit such offences should be aware that the nation will not tolerate these moves.

Majlis Speaker on Increasing Military Strength

LD2005091488 Tehran IRNA in English 0835 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 20, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani Thursday reiterated that Iran was not at war with Iraq alone but "with global arrogance, indeed."

He said now that the U.S. and Iraq's other backers have become "too much impudent and insolent, we too should increase our military strength... in order to take more effective and important steps in the war fronts."

The speaker made the remarks in a meeting here with a group of publicity officials of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) from throughout the country.

Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani who is also a member of the Supreme Defence Council (SDC) and the council spokesman, further told the visitors that the key to Iran's success in the almost eight year old war with Iraq, has been the presence of volunteer forces in the battle fronts. "We should never overlook this positive point of experience," he emphasized.

On the situation in the Persian Gulf following the U.S. intervention, he said, "The situation is different this year, compared with the year before. The Americans have officially entered into a war with us. We are really at war with the U.S. at the time being."

The speaker went on to say, "The U.S. has practically participated in Iraq's crime in the southern waters and it was behind the (Iraqi) attack on Larak (oil terminal). U.S. ships have guided Iraqi pilots and caused trouble for our defensive forces. In Al-Faw they (the Americans) officially entered into war with us. They have been active in providing financial and propaganda support for Iraq since the beginning of the war and (Washington) itself is responsible for this crime (the war).

"It (U.S.) spares no efforts in compelling its henchmen like Saudi Arabia and others to back Iraq and you witnessed the Mecca tragedy last year, and they are still continuing their mischiefs."

Over 400 pilgrims, mainly Iranians were martyred and hundreds of others wounded during Hajj rallies in Mecca in July last year. Iran believes plaincloth [as received] Saudi police had been instructed by their government to shoot at the Muslim demonstrators in a bid to suppress

their anti-U.S. and anti-Israeli voice. The Islamic Republic termed the tragic event as a "Washington-Riyadh conspiracy" against Tehran.

In conclusion, the speaker expressed hope that the extraordinary despatch of "Mohammad (SAW) Corps" to the war fronts on June 5, would be "one of the most splendid despatches."

In another development Thursday, Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the operations "Beyt ol-Moqaddas-6" was "an appropriate warning to the U.S.-Iraqi cooperation against Iran."

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani who was speaking in the open session of the Majlis Thursday, further expressed hope that the new Iranian thrust "in the heart of the Kurdistan region" where strategic heights between two important provinces of Irbil and Al-Sulaymaniyah have fallen into the control of Iranian forces, "would have valuable repercussions in military achievements."

Iran launched the new operations near Dukan town and a dam with the same name in Iraq's Al-Sulaymaniyah Province Tuesday night. Iranian forces gained control over another 25 sq. kms of Iraqi territory in the province.

They also killed and wounded over 2,000 Iraqis and took another batch of 407 as prisoners.

Grand Ayatollahs Deny Foreign Radio Reports

LD1905180588 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Following false reports broadcast by foreign radios attributing some remarks to Their Excellencies Grand Ayatollahs Golpeygani and Najafi-Mara'shi, the Central News Unit correspondent in Qom sought their views by contacting the secretariats of their excellencies.

The secretariat of Grand Ayatollah Golpeygani announced: His excellency rejects the rumors and states as untrue the remarks attributed to him. He has been praying for the victory of the Islamic fighters.

The secretariat of Grand Ayatollah Najafi-Mara'shi also announced: His excellency expresses deep sorrow at the false reports that have been broadcast. He states that such rumors are total fabrications and that he has never held such opinions.

Commentary on Officials' Efforts in Lebanon

LD1905151988 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1100 GMT 19 May 88

[Political commentary: "Our Political Delegation's Efforts in Lebanon"]

[Text] Our country's political delegation, currently in Lebanon, has increased its efforts to end the tragic clashes between the Amal Movement and Hizballah. At the same time reports indicate that the clashes have subsided.

Following the events in southern Lebanon 1 and 1/2 months ago, the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI], which believes that its prime responsibility is to secure unity among Muslims particularly among the Shi'ites, dispatched a high-ranking delegation to Lebanon led by Ayatollah Jannati, a member of the Council of Guardians.

The delegation planned to investigate the reasons behind the clashes and help with efforts to improve the situation and restore a healthy atmosphere. Despite the delegation's efforts which initially managed to prevent an escalation of the clashes and division between the two sides, unfortunately the flames of the unpopular and wearing clashes were rekindled among the children of a single religious sect in the southern sector of Beirut due to the absence of a responsible attitude among some members of the warring factions.

At this point, Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam, the deputy foreign minister responsible for Middle Eastern affairs, and our country's ambassadors in Syria and Lebanon undertook a praiseworthy effort to secure a cease-fire to resolve the problems.

However, as a result of disruptive actions by some individuals who knowingly or unknowingly are weakening the Shi'ites and Muslims in Lebanon, the clashes continued until the president, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Khamene'i, contacted Hafiz al-Asad directly.

They agreed to set up a quadripartite committee comprised of Iran, Syria, the Amal Movement, and Hizballah to end the clashes promptly. Several days later the Syrian Army, which has been stationed in the western sector of Beirut for 15 months, dispatched more troops to the capital of Lebanon in order to extend its security plan to Beirut's southern sector.

Eventually, Deputy Foreign Minister Besharati left for Syria and Lebanon as the president's envoy to hold talks with all interested parties and to try to bring an end to these unfortunate clashes and tragic fratricide.

On the basis of reports, thanks to the new round of Iranian-Syrian efforts, the clashes have subsided and the Syrian military forces have postponed their plan to enter Beirut's southern sector until the outcome of the talks is known.

Our country's political delegation in Lebanon is currently trying to convince the warring sides they should lay down their weapons and stop killing each other.

A more important issue is that the political future of the Shi'ite groups in southern Lebanon, in the southern sector of Beirut, and eventually in the Al-Biqa' Valley should be determined, and the causes of discord and division between the Shi'ites should be eliminated.

It is obvious that this issue faces countless difficulties. The record of the Shi'ite organizations over the past 6 years should be studied so that steps can be taken to restore unity and friendship among them.

However, the Zionist regime and supporters of the U.S. plans in the region and Lebanon welcome any discord among Muslims, particularly among the Shi'ites. In Lebanon's tribal society, where religious sects play an important role, it is clear that the separatists and right-wing individuals attach great hope to the weakening of Shi'ites.

The various Shi'ite organizations should therefore, strive to remove the causes of discord instead of guarding their own particular group's gains. Moreover, they should seriously strive for the unity of Muslims and the survival of the Shi'ites in the chaos-striken society of Lebanon.

Our country's political delegation's efforts in Lebanon, while preventing the escalation of the clashes, has brought hope for the Shi'ites' political future. The continuation of these efforts, with the coordination of all the interested parties, can hopefully resolve the problem permanently.

Opposition Leader Outlines Anti-Khomeyni Action

PM1905142988 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 18-24 May 88 p 17

[Interview with the "leader of the Iranian opposition in Kuwait," referred to as "Al-Sayyid Yusuf," by Fadyah al-Zu'bi; date, place not given]

[Text] In his first interview, the leader of the Iranian opposition in Kuwait agreed to talk to AL-MAJALLAH provided that his identity was not revealed and we were content to refer to him as "Al-Sayyid Yusuf" for security reasons, because Iranian intelligence men are pursuing him.

"Al-Sayyid Yusuf," leader of the opposition formed by Iranians residing in Kuwait, in the past occupied sensitive positions in Iran for 20 years. He also worked with the Khomeyni regime in 1981 and 1982 and still maintains strong links with a number of those working within the Iranian regime, who are afraid to declare their opposition.

[Al-Zu'bi] Why did you stop working with the Khomeyni regime?

[Yusuf] Because my ideas and views differ from his. And although both I and my family are Muslims, I find the Khomeyni regime has distanced itself from Islam. Khomeyni returned to Iran with one objective: to take revenge on the shah and his group.

Khomeyni is not Iran's leader. His desire is to cause trouble in the region. The region is Muslim and rich, and therefore, the task assigned to him was to cause trouble in the region, collect its money, and put it the big powers' pockets by means of arms purchases.

That phase is now coming to an end now that Khomeyni's power continues to decline. His followers knew the reasons behind his objectives and have exposed his lies, particularly as we know that only 1.5 million of the Iranian people, out of a population of 44 million, support Khomeyni.

During the shah's era these people were involved in illegal businesses such as trading in drugs and so on. Their present power is based on their possession of arms.

[Al-Zu'bi] What is the size of the Iranian opposition in Kuwait?

[Yusuf] In Kuwait there are nearly 30,000 Iranians of holding Iranian citizenship, and only 200 of them oppose Khomeyni. The remainder are ordinary people who worry about their personal interests.

[Al-Zu'bi] What is the objective of your opposition to Khomeyni?

[Yusuf] My prime objective is to liberate Iran and the Iranian people from Khomeyni's grip and Khomeyni's errors. Second, I want to assist Kuwait and the Gulf states that oppose his aggressive practices.

[Al-Zu'bi] How can you help in this regard?

[Yusuf] In many ways. For instance, we have our own radio program which is broadcast 2 hours daily and can be heard by the Iranian people anywhere in Iran. Its aim is to reveal the truth to the Iranian people and help the Arabs in the Gulf region. Twenty minutes are allocated for the sons of the region. This radio began to operate nearly a year ago.

Moreover, we have the capability of knowing what is going on in Iran, whether in sensitive places as in the ministries or at the people's level, by means of the opposition inside Iran which furnishes us with accurate information.

By virtue of the activities of the Iranian opposition inside Iran we can confirm that the military, political, and economic situation in Iran is very bad. The opposition, both inside and outside Iran, helped Iraq recapture Al-Faw.

We can also confirm that the opposition will not give Khomeyni any peace of mind or comfort. I can say that the hijacking and bombing operations as well as the attacks carried out by the Khomeyni regime are nothing but acts meant to eclipse the deteriorating situation in the military, political, and economic areas in Iran.

We will hound him everywhere until his downfall. We know everything that Khomeyni does inside Iran from the reports sent by the opposition inside the country.

[Al-Zu'bi] How does the opposition live in Kuwait?

[Yusuf] We live in peace in Kuwait. And we will not allow the Iranian regime to disturb the atmosphere in Kuwait, a country that seeks to establish peace in the region.

[Al-Zu'bi] Can the Iranian opposition in Kuwait move from one country to another?

[Yusuf] Yes. We can travel to any country at any time.

[Al-Zu'bi] Do you have contacts with the Iranian opposition in the Gulf states?

[Yusuf] Certainly. We have a wide communications network that works in secret. We have managed to warn officials in some Gulf states about sabotage plans and acts that could have led to disasters had they been carried out.

We managed to spare these states such consequences. We provided officials with information that helped in arresting the saboteurs. As an opposition group, we will do all we can to expose Khomeyni's schemes.

[Al-Zu'bi] Some explosions have occurred in Kuwait involving a number of Iranians. Was this due to your relations with and residence in Kuwait?

[Yusuf] Any problems occurring in any Gulf state where Iranians reside are in fact instigated by the Khomeyni regime. The objective is to force the governments in the region to deport the Iranians living there to Iran.

This is precisely what Khomeyni wants and seeks to achieve, because we as an opposition constitute a threat, a goad, and an obstacle to Khomeyni's march and objectives. The objective is to harm the Iranians in the Gulf.

[Al-Zu'bi] Does the Iranian opposition carry out any violent acts against the states supporting the Khomeyni regime and supplying it with arms, as Khomeyni's followers do in hijacking and bombing operations, to secure certain concessions?

[Yusuf] If the Iranian regime dispatches some groups to carry out hijacking or bombing operations for the purpose of getting money or arms or pursuing any other interests, we do not respond in like manner.

That is not our nature, the Iranian opposition does not use such methods. However, as we know the Khomeyni regime is ripe for a fall and Iran will return to its former stability, our relations with the states currently supporting the Khomeyni regime will be different. We all know that the continuation of the Gulf war depends on the continued supply of arms to Iran.

[Al-Zu'bi] Do you believe that the opposition's return to Iran is near?

[Yusuf] The return is near and Khomeyni's downfall depends on cutting off the flow of arms to Iran.

Flag of Freedom on Demonstrations, Clashes

NC2005042888 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 19 May 88

[Excerpts] Our fellow fighters have sent a more comprehensive report from Esfahan on demonstrations by the people of Esfahan and Khomeynishahr against the Islamic regime and against the continuation of the war with Iraq.

According to this report, the demonstrations of Esfahan and Khomeynishahr residents against the Islamic regime were spurred on by the utterances of Hajj Ahmadi, the Khomeynishahr Friday imam, at the Friday prayers.

In his sermon, Hajj Ahmadi vehemently criticized the regime of the mullahs, whom he described as "contemporary Mo'aviyahs" [rivals of 'Ali] who do not care for the people, sending them to be killed while they themselves ride in bulletproof cars.

After this sermon, which caused immense (?indignation) on the part of the people, the residents of Khomeynishahr and Esfahan took to the streets, shouting "Death to Khomeyni and his republic," and staged demonstrations.

Taheri, the Esfahan Friday imam, who is also Ruhollah Khomeyni's deputy in Esfahan Province, was terrified and sent a message to Hajj Ahmadi in Khomeynishahr telling him that he should not lead Friday prayers any more, thus suspending him from his task of leading Friday prayers.

The residents of Khomeynishahr reacted immediately and staged demonstrations in the streets, shouting "Death to Taheri, death to Khomeyni and the leaders of the Islamic Republic." They then marched toward Esfahan.

Our fellow fighters report that when the enraged marchers arrived in Esfahan, thousands of residents of that city joined them in shouting "Death to Khomeyni." The demonstrations, which were extensive, assumed a political tone.

Armed komiteh guards appeared on the streets where the march was taking place and attempted to disperse the demonstrators. They were not successful. A large number of people were killed or injured in the clashes which ensued between demonstrators and the guards.

The terrified guards fled the scene immediately. The latest reports from this city indicate that the embers are smoldering under the ashes, waiting to burst into flames. The people of Esfahan and Khomeynishahr are nursing a deep hatred and loathing for the so-called Islamic ruling regime. [passage omitted]

The uneasy situation in our country has been widely reflected in the international mass media. Radio Monte Carlo referred to the proliferation of demonstrations by our disenchanted compatriots.

It reported that the Islamic Republic regime is trying hard to compensate for its recent defeats in the Persian Gulf and the Al-Faw Peninsula and allay the rancor of its furious people.

According to this report, this is happening at a time when the Islamic regime faces another chronic problem, the fallout from the recent elections in the form of demonstrations in some major Iranian cities.

Radio Monte Carlo cites eyewitnesses who recently left the country as saying that most Iranian cities, particularly Qom, Mashhad, and Esfahan, have become the scene of bloody clashes between the armed supporters of Ahmad Khomeyni and his opponents. [passage omitted]

Air Transport Accord With DPRK Approved

LD1905084688 Tehran IRNA in English 1650 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 18, IRNA—The Majlis (Parliament) in its Wednesday's open session approved a bill on air transport agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

A bill concerning trade, economic and technical agreement between Iran and New Zealand was also passed in the today's session chaired by speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Tehran Deputy Qorban 'Ali Dori-Najafabadi thanked Iranian people for their massive turn-out in the third parliamentary polls and condemned plots hatched by global arrogance against the Islamic Revolution.

He called on Amal and Hizballah forces in Lebanon to cease their clashes and instead aim their guns toward the Zionist usurpers.

Oil Official Addresses Persian Gulf Seminar

LD1805194288 Tehran IRNA in English 1858 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 18, IRNA—Iran owns the biggest commercial and oil tanker fleet in the Persian Gulf, managing director of the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) announced here today.

Mohammad Suri speaking at a two-day seminar on the Persian Gulf added that while Iran ranks first in OPEC in terms oil tanker tonnage, it stands at the eleventh place in the world.

Another speaker at the afternoon session of the seminar was Professor Musavi from Shiraz University, who reviewed Persian Gulf history and said according to historical documents dating back several centuries before Christ, the waterway has always been referred to as the Persian Gulf.

More on the issue, Dr. Shahabi in charge of Economic Bureau of the Foreign Ministry's Institute for Political and International Studies, said since the exploration and export of oil as well as the increase of its price in the early 1970s, commercial activities got a substantial boost in this strategic region.

Oil exports brought huge wealth to the region promoting trade and upgrading the life standards of regional people, he noted.

This huge wealth, Dr. Shahabi said, caused the total exports of small regional countries like Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to reach some 15.5 billion dollars in 1987.

These countries collectively accounted for 12.6 billion dollars worth of imports during the same year, he said.

Shahabi continued that the trade volume of the said countries in 1986 was 0.72 percent of the total volume of world trade, while they accounted for 3.1 percent of the developing countries' imports. "The total population of these countries is less than 0.1 percent of the world population," Shahabi added.

He concluded by predicting that regional countries would play a major part in the overall world trade in the future due to the strategic location of the region and their rich oil deposits.

UN Delegation Calls for Study of Toxic Gas Use

NC2005063988 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 May 88

[Telephone report by unidentified correspondent of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran in London—recorded]

[Text] The delegation of the Islamic Republic at the United Nations submitted a note to the UN Secretariat last night in which it has officially called for a full delegation of experts to be assigned to study the extent of the Iraqi regime's recent use of chemical weapons.

The Islamic Republic's note discusses the continuation of the Iraqi regime's obstinate policy of using chemical weapons against the villages of (Mulla Shaykh) and (Buzaylah) near Sardasht, as well as against (Neyl) village in Marivan during the past 2 days.

As a result of these attacks, 3 persons were killed and 158 were wounded. The note calls on the UN Security Council to seriously examine Iraq's continued use of chemical weapons on the basis of Article Five of UN Security Council Resolution No 612 and to take immediate punitive and deterrent steps against the Iraqi regime, which has violated this resolution.

The note points out: This is the most recent example of Iraq's declared policy of insisting on using illegal and criminal chemical weapons. It once again shows how the failure of the international forums to punish the Iraqi regime for its crimes and to prevent it from committing more has resulted in a disaster.

The Islamic Republic's UN delegation warns in its note that it is now clear to everyone that the UN's negligence in protesting the Iraqi regime for its extensive use of chemical weapons in Halabjah, which resulted in the massacre of its residents, has only led to the continuation and intensification of the aggressive Iraqi regime's crimes.

Two 'Iraqi Agents' Killed While Planting Bomb

LD1905162188 Tehran IRNA in English 1551 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—Two Iraqi agents were killed when a bomb they were intending to plant on Arak-Ahvaz railroad went off on 10 May [date as received]. According to disciplinary officers who are investigating the issue a third bomb planter fled the area after the incident.

On April 13, a relatively strong bomb believed to have been planted by the Iraqi regime's mercenaries was discovered and dismantled by security forces at a bus terminal in West Tehran.

Combat Operations in War With Iraq Continue

'Beyt ol-Moqaddas-6' Operations

LD1905144588 Tehran IRNA in English 1430 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—Iran's Muslim combatants on a patrol mission in the "Beyt ol-Moqaddas-6" operational theater, northeastern Iraq, infiltrated Iraqi positions Wednesday night, killing and wounding scores of enemy soldiers and capturing many others.

Announcing the above here Thursday, the Central Headquarters of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) reported that Iranian forces also heavily shelled Iraqi fortifications and troop concentration sites in the "Beyt ol-Moqaddas-6" operational theater last night and today morning, setting ablaze a number of enemy tanks and armoured personnel carriers.

Transfer of Iraqi POW's behind the fronts is underway and the Iranian combatants are now fortifying their positions in the liberated areas.

"Beyt ol-Moqaddas-6" operations was launched around Dukan town and the dam of the same name inside Iraq's Al-Sulaimaniyah Province Tuesday night.

IRGC Infiltration Noted

NC2005055588 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 May 88

[Text] The IRGC General Staff has announced that fighters of the IRGC Ground Forces carried out a patrol-combat operation in the "Beyt ol-Moqaddas-6" operational theater and were able to infiltrate the heart of the Zionist enemy's positions and kill tens of Saddamists, capturing several.

During these operations a large quantity of arms and ammunition was taken by the forces of Islam.

The fighters of Islam also carried out heavy and effective fire on the Saddamist positions and strongholds in this area and were able to destroy artillery positions and enemy positions and to set fire to several tanks, APC's, and vehicles of the Zionist enemy.

Communique No 3,207

LD1905174988 Tehran IRNA in English 1739 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—Iranian Air Force planes effectively carried out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman Wednesday in support of the Navy reconnoitering serveral foreign vessels, said a military communique released here Thursday.

The 3207th communique of the Joint Staff Command said Iranian naval forces, defending oil rigs and islands, alertly patrolled the coastal and international waters of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, yesterday.

The communique said an Iraqi warplane, attempting to approach the air space of a southern Iranian island Wednesday, was forced to flee by heavy anti-aircraft fire of the Muslim combatants.

On the war fronts, yesterday, the Muslim combatants checked movement of enemy forces by despatching patrol groups and establishing watch posts throughout the battlefields.

Iraqi forces sustained heavy casualties and damage Wednesday, when they came under Iranian Muslim combatants' heavy fire which also hit positions, fortifications, troop-concentration sites, motorized columns, and engineering activities of the Ba'thist forces.

Movements of Iraqi tanks in Panjwin, Helaleh and Sumar as well as enemy motorized columns in Sayyid Sadiq, Qasr-e Shirin and Naft-e Shah were subjected to heavy fire of the Iranian combatants Wednesday, as a result of which Iraqi troops sustained substantial casualties and damage.

An Iraqi copter sighted flying over Kushk region yesterday was forced to flee by Iranian fire.

Gendarmerie forces of the Islamic Republic shelled Iraqi positions Wednesday inflicting casualties and damage on them, concluded the communique.

Briefs

Tabriz Transmitters Operational

Thanks to the efforts of the television network extension unit and the maintenance and repair unit for the television and FM transmitters of the Tabriz center of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, four new and powerful FM transmitters, each having 10 kilowatts, became operational on 18 May. The various first network programs of the Voice and Vision of Iran, including open Islamic Majlis sessions, Radio Koran, religious lessons, and warnings of aerial attacks in emergencies, may now be received on 90.6 and 90.7 mhz. [Summary] [*NC2005045188 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1700 GMT 19 May 88*]

Nepal

Education Minister Resigns After Stampede Report

BK1905003888 Hong Kong AFP in English 0026 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Kathmandu, May 18 (AFP)—Nepal's minister for education and cultural resigned from the government Wednesday following the release of a report on a stampede at a football match here that left more than 70 people dead.

Keshar Bahadur Bista, who is also chairman of the National Sports Council, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE he had tendered his resignation to King Birendra, through Prime Minister Marich Man Singh Shrestha, on "moral grounds." He did not elaborate.

A formal announcement on Mr. Bista's resignation decision is expected to be made Thursday, official sources said.

A commission report released Wednesday held no one directly responsible for casualties in the March 12 stampede but criticized a government-run hospital for its response to the emergency.

It also said the National Sports Council had failed to meet its "responsibility of ownership, protection and control," over the national stadium, where 72 people died and more than 100 were injured during the stampede, sparked by a sudden hailstorm during a football match.

Mr. Bista was at the stadium when the tragedy occurred.

The commission, headed by central regional court Additional Judge Bhairav Prasad Lamsal, began its probe March 24 and submitted the report to the Mr. Shrestha's government last week. An edited version was released through the government-controlled media on Wednesday.

The report was also critical of the All-Nepal Football Association, whose president, MP Kamal Thapa, resigned his post March 16.

Pakistan

Indian Defense Secretary Arrives 18 May

BK1805154588 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 May 88

[Text] The Indian defense secretary, S.K. Bhatnagar, arrived in Islamabad today on a 3-day official visit to Pakistan. He will hold talks with his Pakistani counterpart in Islamabad on Siachen Glacier issue, beginning tomorrow. It is expected that the Indian defense secretary will call on the president, the prime minister, and the minister of state for defense.

Talks on Siachen Begin 19 May

BK1905063288 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] The 2-day India-Pakistan talks on the Siachen issue began in Rawalpindi this morning. The Pakistani side is led by Defense Secretary Syed Ijlal Haider Zaidi and the Indian delegation by Defense Secretary S.K. Bhatnagar. Radio Pakistan's correspondent has learned that two rounds of formal talks will be held today.

Zain Noorani Returns Home From Moscow Visit

BK1905115588 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 19 May 88

[Text] Pakistan and the Soviet Union have agreed in principle to set up a joint ministerial commission. The details regarding the same will be worked out shortly through diplomatic channels.

This was stated by the minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr Zain Noorani, at a news conference at Karachi airport this afternoon after returning from a 3-day good-will visit to Moscow.

He said he visited the Soviet Union as the head of a parliamentary delegation under instructions of the prime minister on the occasion of 40th-year celebrations of starting diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The minister of state for foreign affairs said they had held fruitful discussions on bilateral relations with the Soviet leaders. He further said it is his considered opinion that the Soviet Union seeks to improve relations with Pakistan and also seeks our cooperation in this regard.

To a question, Mr Zain Noorani said that the Soviet foreign minister, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, had accepted his invitation to visit Pakistan, details of which will be worked out later on.

Noorani Meets With Shevardnadze in Moscow

For Soviet reportage on talks held in Moscow between Zain Noorani, minister of state for foreign affairs, and Soviet officials, including Eduard Shevardnadze, minister of foreign affairs, and Yuliy Vorontsov, first deputy foreign minister, see the Near East & South Asia section of the 16 May Soviet Union DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Sri Lanka

UNP General Secretary Shot by 'Terrorists'

BK2005052288 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0505 GMT 20 May 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 20 May (LANKA PUWATH)—The general secretary of the United National Party (UNP), Nandalal Fernando, was shot at and seriously wounded when southern terrorist gunmen opened fire with T-56 rifles at Mr Fernando's car as he was leaving for work from his home about 0830 hours (local time) this morning, at Pamankade, Wellawatte, in Colombo 06, police told LANKA PUWATH.

Mr Fernando was rushed to hospital for emergency surgery. Police said Mr Fernando's backup security vehicle had given chase to the gunmen riding motorcycles, but they had eluded capture.

Dies During Surgery

BK2005071088 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0655 GMT 20 May 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 20 May (LANKA PUWATH)—United National Party (UNP) General Secretary Nandalal Fernando succumbed to his injuries while undergoing surgery.

Provincial Council Candidate Shot Dead

BK1905095188 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0831 GMT 19 May 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, May 19 (LANKA PUWATH)—Terrorists shot dead a United National Party provincial council candidate at Kundasale about 10 kilometers from Sri Lanka's hill capital of Kandy this morning while he was standing at a bus stop in the village of Kengala.

Official sources told LANKA PUWATH that the victim was Jayaratne Heenkande, who had been gunned down by terrorists with a T-56 automatic rifle from a van in which they were travelling.

Official sources gave the time of the murder of 0700 hours (local time) today and believe this to an act committed by the JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna—People's Liberation Front].

A report from Horana, 50 kilometers south of Colombo states that two terrorists, one of them armed with a 5.56 rifle had last night raided the home of Mrs Sheila Jayakody, a United National Party candidate for the provincial council elections in the Horana area.

The terrorists had tried to break down the front door but having fasted [as received] they had fired through a window, killing 19 year old Anura Dissanayake, a student of Janadhipathi Mahavidyalaya [university], Horana.

Mrs Jayakody and her mother had escaped unhurt in the attack on their home at Ponkunivita, a village in the Horana police area.

This is alleged to be a JVP act.

An attempt was made by terrorists on the life of chairman of the district development council of Panunuwila at Sapugaskande, a few miles north of Colombo, last night.

However, the gunman firing a T-56 automatic rifle missed their intended victim, H.D. Benedict but shot his 16 year old daughter on the leg. She was admitted to the General Hospital Colombo for treatment. The incident occurred at 2005 hours (local time) yesterday.

At Matara, in a combined operation last Tuesday Sri Lanka's security forces seized 1 16-bore shot gun, 2 uniforms, 15 meters of khaki cloth and JVP literature from a house at Kilittuwa-Lenama in the Akuressa police of southern Sri Lanka's Matara District.